

Annette Mackin on the real politics of the Tory leader 50 years after his death >>Pages 14&15

**Churchill a racist?
Oh yes!**



Alex Callinicos on the political fallout after the death of King Abdullah >>Page 6

West depends on Saudi relationship



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AS GREECE REJECTS AUSTERITY



SYRIZA SUPPORTERS celebrate in Athens on Sunday evening
PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

WE CAN DO IT HERE

PEOPLE IN Greece delivered a resounding rejection of austerity in the country's general election.

They have shown that it is possible to stand up to the bosses and the bankers—and boosted workers everywhere.

The rich will pressure the new Syriza government to compromise.

But workers in Greece are already fighting to make sure Syriza keeps its promises—and have called on workers everywhere to join the fight against austerity.

>>turn to pages 2,3,10&11

ANTI-RACISM

Stand up to racism and fascism

ANTI-RACISTS across Europe will be marching as part of an international day of action on 21 March.

In Britain, demonstrations will take place in London, Glasgow and Cardiff.

The marches have been called against a backdrop of rising Islamophobia and anti-immigrant scapegoating.

>>Pages 4&5

EGYPT

Crackdown on marches for revolution

THE EGYPTIAN government launched a violent assault on peaceful protests on the anniversary of the revolution last weekend.

Eighteen protesters were killed by police, including socialist activist Shaimaa el-Sabbagh.

More than 150 protesters were also arrested.

>>Page 8

ELECTIONS

Building a left alternative to austerity

THE TRADE Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) held its national conference last Saturday.

More than 280 delegates discussed how to use the elections in May to challenge the Tories and the Labour Party, and build a fightback.

>>Page 7



THE THINGS
THEY SAY

‘In normal times, and in a normal country, Syriza would be a joke party on the furthest fringes of the ultra-Left’

Tory MP Daniel Hannan writes in the Daily Mail

‘It is a coalition of Trotskyists, Maoists, eco-protesters and Occupy types’

Hannan continues his rant

‘Tie-less atheist’

A bizarre attack on Alexis Tsipras from the Times

‘Athens faces financial collapse’

Syriza’s victory rattles the Daily Telegraph

‘Syriza’s victory has boosted hopes of other anti-austerity groups across Europe’

The Daily Express worries

‘Inspired many Europeans while giving their governments the shivers’

The Economist on how ordinary people see Syriza compared to politicians



‘Syriza win means hope has arrived in Greece’

VOTERS IN Greece delivered a resounding rejection of austerity in last Sunday’s general election.

Radical left party Syriza stormed to victory while the mainstream parties were left humiliated.

The Tory New Democracy party, which led the last government, won just 76 seats in the 300-seat parliament.

Labour-type Pasok, which pushed through cuts in coalition with New Democracy, was reduced to just 13 seats.

Angeliki is a school worker sacked by the last government to pay off the bankers’ bailout.

She told Socialist Worker, “Hope has just arrived in Greece. For years we have suffered the agony of the crisis.

“All that time we hoped this would happen.”

There was jubilation in the streets as workers heard the result.

It’s the first time since dictatorship ended in the 1970s that a party other than New Democracy or Pasok has been elected.

But as people in Greece celebrated, world leaders and the right wing media predicted impending doom.

The Daily Mail newspaper claimed



School worker Angeliki

FIGURE IT OUT

149 seats that Syriza has in the 300-seat Greek parliament—just two short of a majority. Syriza won 36 percent of the vote

76 seats won by the Tory New Democracy party—which ran the last government

17 seats grabbed by the Nazi Golden Dawn. Its vote held up despite leading members being imprisoned



SYRIZA LEADER Alexis Tsipras speaks at a rally before Sunday’s election

PICTURES: GUY SMALLMAN

Greece faced a run on its banks.

David Cameron said the result would “increase economic uncertainty across Europe”.

The reality is that ordinary people in Greece have been living with “economic uncertainty” for the last five years and they have had enough.

Workers have fought austerity with general strikes, occupations and protests. They feel that Syriza’s victory reflects that struggle.

Angeliki said, “All the workers who are fighting overturned the government.

“It isn’t just us school workers. It’s cleaners picketing government buildings, media workers in occupation, strikers at Coca Cola and

cement factories and protesters defending the environment.”

The radical left party Syriza was formed in 2004 around an offshoot of the Communist Party.

In a 2009 election it won 4.6 percent of the vote. Now it has won 36 percent.

Impact

Syriza is against the impact of austerity that has been imposed on Greece to pay for bailing out the banks. It wants to write off at least half of Greece’s £238 billion debt.

Stock markets tumbled and the euro briefly fell to an 11-year low against the dollar after the result.

But Tsipras quickly formed

a coalition with the right wing Independent Greeks (see column, right).

The key question now is whether Syriza will stand up to the bankers and creditors.

“Now the left is in government, first of all we want our jobs back,” said Angeliki. “Then we want it to do something about austerity.

“We want a completely different sort of politics to the old parties.

“We’ll keep fighting until we win back what was taken from us.”

On other pages...

Dave Sewell reports from Athens after Syriza’s victory >>Pages 10&11

Antarsya on where next after the election

GIORGOS PITTAS, a candidate for the anti-capitalist coalition Antarsya, spoke to Socialist Worker about the key priorities after Sunday’s election.

“We will campaign to cancel the debt, nationalise the banks under workers’ control and leave the euro.

We need to overthrow the Troika, not negotiate with it.

Austerity governments have made racism a top priority.

We need to make building an anti-racist movement one of ours.

We should get rid of detention camps, bring back citizenship for migrants’ children and voting rights for migrants.

But Syriza’s new coalition partners say this is a “red line” that they can’t cross.

We also need to get

on with the trial of the fascist Golden Dawn. The anti-racist demonstration on 21 March will be very important.

Finally we need to fight war and nationalism. Greece is in talks with the US over building yet more bases here for launching drone attacks on the Middle East.

For us the alternative to the EU isn’t nationalism—it’s international solidarity.”



An Antarsya poster

More than 1.2 million workers were thrown out of work during this crisis. They need their jobs back.

Supporters of Syriza celebrated last Sunday as the radical left coalition was elected in Greece

Big battles lie ahead after the left’s historic victory

Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

when people rioted after the police killed school student Alexandros Grigoropoulos.

Instead of meekly accepting the demands of the bankers and the bosses, Greeks fought back.

There were 32 general strikes, hundreds of smaller strikes, occupations of city and town squares, and student mobilisations. Syriza’s support soared.

But the battles are only just beginning. The ruling class has two ways to deal with the election of radical governments.

It first tries financial pressure to threaten economic annihilation unless the new rulers “see sense”.

If that doesn’t work, more violent methods can be used.

The people of Greece have voted to end austerity. But capitalists don’t care about democracy.

Their power doesn’t live in parliament but in their control of banks, industry, the unelected state apparatus, the police and the army. They will seek to use this power now.

The Financial Times newspaper on Tuesday of this week admitted, “To service its debt burden would require Greece to operate as a quasi slave economy”.

MORE ON THE WEB

● **Eyewitness report from Syriza rally in Athens**
bit.ly/1CJLIYm

● **Workers and anti-capitalists discuss fighting austerity**
bit.ly/1y2OXEN

● **The Greek debt crisis explained**
bit.ly/15F0jHm

But it insisted that Tsipras must compromise.

The choice for Syriza is to surrender to the blackmail or to confront the bankers.

Tsipras’s choice to go into a “national unity” government with the right wing Independent Greeks is a warning of how he sees the future.

Austerity will not be reversed without refusing to pay any of the debt, taking over the banks under democratic ownership and encouraging workers’ control in key parts of the economy.

This is what Greek workers must fight for.

And they should use the same methods that have brought them to this success—strikes, mass mobilisations, occupations and democracy from below that can go further than Syriza offers.

Everywhere we should raise the demand “Cancel the Greek debt”. But there are other key lessons from Greece.

Katerina Thoidou, a candidate for the Antarsya anti-capitalist coalition, said, “The best form of support for the fight in Greece will be to build strikes and resistance all over Europe.”

So we need to push for more resistance and solidarity.

We need to get behind any groups of workers who strike back.

And we need more battles against racism and Islamophobia.

The 21 March anti-racist and anti-fascist demonstrations, which were originally called from Greece, will be particularly important.

Katerina added, “The biggest challenge for people across Europe will be to build new anti-capitalist parties.”

Britain is not in the same situation as Greece. But we have to do more than applaud and observe.

The SWP has called for a more united left, and a stronger left electoral challenge through the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition.

We hope that everyone cheering when Syriza won will fight together here.

Who are the Independent Greeks?

SYRIZA’S NEW coalition partner, the Independent Greeks or Anel, is a split from the Tory New Democracy.

Its leader, Panos Kammenos, was a New Democracy MP but left due to nationalist opposition to the memorandum.

The memorandum demanded austerity and cuts in return for bailouts.

Anel sees austerity as a problem only because it is being imposed by foreigners.

Kammenos is a darling of the shipowners, a homophobe and well known for his Antisemitic outbursts.

His inclusion in government has shocked many Syriza supporters. Some claim it is necessary as Syriza fell just short of a majority.

But Syriza could have formed a minority government.

Many activists in Greece say that Syriza would have sought a coalition with Anel even if it had a majority.

The Syriza leadership has had a long term project to win over the anti-austerity right. It argues that this can unite the “nation”, rather than seeing the fight against austerity as a battle of the working class.

This reflects the idea that governments should rule in the “national interest” which blurs real class divisions.

Racism has been a key weapon of the Greek and European elite. Many expect Syriza to bring in anti-racist measures.

Yet a strategy of trying to keep the bigots of Anel on board will leave the left fighting with its hands tied.

Ed’s response is shameful

THERE WERE no congratulations for Syriza from Labour leader Ed Miliband.

Instead he merely said, “Who the Greek people elect is a decision for them”.

His attitude reflects the fact that Pasok, a Labour-type party that implemented austerity in Greece, was almost annihilated in the vote.

Miliband may well see in that a foretaste of his own potential fate.

A group of 15 Labour MPs issued a public statement on the morning of Syriza’s win.

This expressed concern about elements of Labour’s policy agenda. It urged Labour to fight for public ownership of the railways, and a return to collective bargaining and employment rights in the workplace.

Many people support those policies. It’s significant that only 15 out of 257 Labour MPs would put their name to them.



‘We need to stand up to racism and fascism in Europe’

by KEN OLENDE

WHEN ANTI-RACISTS march in Britain on Saturday 21 March, they will be joining an international movement—particularly important in Greece.

Katerina Thoidou of the Greek anti-fascist coalition Keerfa explained, “We will need international solidarity on 21 March.

“We expect the international anti-fascist movement to support our fight, but also to stand against Islamophobia and racism elsewhere in Europe.

“It will be very important to show that we don’t want governments to divide people between Muslims and non-Muslims.

“We want to fight together against austerity.”

More than 20,000 marched in Athens last year and around 10,000 people joined the demonstrations in London, Glasgow and Cardiff.

Ramp

This year it’s more important than ever that more people stand up to racism, as politicians ramp up scapegoating and Islamophobia in the run-up to the general election.

Birmingham resident Shabina Bano was involved in the campaign against the Trojan Horse witch hunt. It was centred on lies about a “Muslim plot” to take over local schools.

She told Socialist Worker, “Some Muslim shops in Birmingham’s Sparkhill area had bricks thrown through their windows after the Paris attacks.

“I know Muslim women who wear the hijab and have been spat on.

“But people from Birmingham are going to the anti-racist demonstration in London on 21 March.

“We need to stand united,” said Shabina.

“We need



Home secretary Theresa May

BACK STORY

Stand Up to Racism is organising demonstrations in London, Cardiff and Glasgow on 21 March

●Right wingers and racists are trying to use the Paris shootings to whip up racism against Muslims and migrants

●This is likely to get worse as the general election nears

●As many anti-racists as possible should join the demonstrations

●The call for anti-racist protests was issued by Greek activists fighting the Nazi Golden Dawn

to work together regardless of colour or religion. And when someone’s in need, we need to come together.”

The Stand Up to Racism campaign issued a statement on the Paris attacks.

It said, “We strongly identify with the response in London after the 7/7 bombings and in Norway after Anders Breivik’s murderous attacks.

“The call was for unity, a defence of freedom and civil liberties, for diverse communities of faith and none to stand together.”

Tory home secretary Theresa May are trying to push a new terror bill through parliament, which would give intelligence services more powers to snoop on people.

But support for the 21 March demonstrations is growing all the time.

US civil rights activist Al Sharpton showed his support last week (see right).

He was pictured alongside Labour MP Diane Abbott, shadow minister Chuka Umunna and PCS union and Black Activists Rising Against Cuts activist Zita Holbourne.

Stand Up to Racism is holding a public meeting this Thursday. “After France: Unity—no to fascism, Antisemitism, Islamophobia—defend civil liberties”, 7-9pm, Thursday 29 January, Committee Room 11, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA



THOUSANDS PROTESTED against racism in London on last year’s demonstration

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Anti-racists mobilise against Ukip as fresh scandals hit the party

IT’S BEEN a bad week for the racist Ukip party. Senior MEP Amjad Bashir defected to the Tories—prompting claims from Ukip that it had suspended him.

Bashir, who had been a party member for over three years, complained about Ukip’s “ridiculous” lack of policies.

Ukip is currently revising its policies after many of them caused embarrassment.

Banning

These included banning people with HIV and tuberculosis from Britain and “exploding” wind farms.

Its secretary Matthew Richardson came under fire last week for comments made in 2010, which described the NHS as the “Reichstag bunker of socialism”.

Richardson also defended Ukip’s bigotry, according to the Sunday Times newspaper. At a meeting last month he said, “People talk about Ukip being bigots. There are hundreds of thousands of bigots in the United



The Stand Up to Ukip launch meeting in Harlow

PICTURE: ADAM COCHRANE

Kingdom and they deserve representation.”

Meanwhile, party leader Nigel Farage said he was “proud” to have taken votes from the Nazi British National Party.

He made the comments to the Bolton News before speaking at a business dinner in the town.

A Stand Up to Ukip (Sutu) protest took place outside the dinner.

Sutu activists also campaigned

for the third week in a row in Great Yarmouth last Saturday.

In Harlow, Essex, 30 campaigners, including councillors, trade unionists and students came to a Sutu launch meeting.

And more activists plan to protest at Ukip’s spring conference in Margate on 28 February.

Sadie Robinson Go to standuptoukip.org

IN BRIEF

‘We are fighting the same battles,’ says Al Sharpton

MORE THAN 200, mostly black, people came to hear US civil rights activist Al Sharpton address Operation Black Vote’s general election campaign launch meeting last Saturday.

Operation Black Vote’s aim is to get ethnic minorities to vote.

Sharpton has been centrally involved in justice campaigns after US cops killed Michael Brown and Eric Garner last year.

He told the meeting, “The battles we are fighting in the US are the same battles you are fighting here.”

Sharpton explained that it’s vital to organise people’s anger so that protests achieve something.

“Otherwise people will end up in more despair than when they woke up,” he said.

Labour MP Diane Abbott also talked about the importance



US civil rights activist Al Sharpton (centre left)

of forcing through change in the capital. She said, “It’s a city with record numbers of millionaires, but one in four children lives in poverty.”

Muhammad Bari from the Muslim Council of Britain said, “Vote. But vote for the right candidates, who support the fight for social justice.”

Other speakers included Operation Black Vote head Simon

Woolley, Lee Jasper of Black Activists Rising Against Cuts and justice campaigner Marcia Rigg.

Operation Black Vote had invited Tory and Lib Dem speakers, but neither of them showed up.

Sabby Dhalu and Weyman Bennett from Unite Against Fascism also reminded people about the 21 March demonstrations.

Ken Olende

Ferguson Solidarity meetings discuss how to get justice

SOME 150 people attended the launch of the Ferguson Solidarity tour in Brixton, south London, last Saturday.

And more than 100 people attended an angry meeting in Tottenham, north London, the next day.

The tour has been organised by Defend the Right to Protest, the NUS black students’ campaign and United Families and Friends.

Speakers discussed the fight to get justice for black people killed

by police in both Britain and the US.

Black Lives Matter organiser Patrisse Cullors told the Tottenham meeting how the movement is growing in the US.

Mark Duggan’s aunt Carole also spoke. His killing by police in Tottenham sparked the 2011 riots.

Patrisse also addressed the Brixton meeting via video link. She said the Missouri governor’s declaration of a state of emergency after

Michael Brown’s killing was a “declaration of war on black people”.

Family campaigners including Marcia Rigg also spoke.

Labour MP Chuka Umunna talked about his family’s experience of police harassment—but claimed things were getting better.

But Lorna Campbell from the London Campaign against Police and State Violence said police “anti-gang” tactics would “devastate black communities.”

Hundreds join vigil in Mold

MORE THAN 200 people joined a candlelit vigil on Thursday of last week in Mold, north Wales, following a “vicious racist” attack.

Dentist Sarandev Singh Bhambra was attacked with a knife in a local Tesco.

Zack Davies, who was arrested

at the scene, has been charged with attempted murder.

He will be asked to enter a plea in March.

The protest was called by Mold United Against Racism.

Organiser David Shinn said the attack left the local community “shocked and saddened”.



Organiser David

Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

RULERS WANT IRAQ INQUIRY TO HIDE CRIMES

THE STENCH of a cover-up surrounding the Iraq war inquiry is growing ever stronger. Inquiry chairman Sir John Chilcot confirmed to David Cameron last week that his report would not be ready until after the general election.

Various war criminals who may face criticism in the final version are delaying the report.

They are using top lawyers to hold it up and water down any evidence against them.

So the inquiry is currently writing to people it intends to criticise to invite their responses before it publishes.

This is the latest in a long line of delays. The inquiry was set up nearly six years ago by the then prime minister Gordon Brown.

It finished taking evidence in 2011 and was due to report at the end of that year.

The inquiry was supposedly meant to be a “non judgemental” investigation into Britain’s involvement in the 2003 Iraq war.

In reality, it will be a whitewash of all the lies that Tony Blair and his government told.

Chilcot is a former top civil servant and “staff counsellor” for

security and intelligence service employees.

And he was a member of the Butler inquiry, which cleared Blair of dishonestly using intelligence in the run-up to the war.

Chilcot also limited the scope of his own inquiry to dealing with “mistakes” and “shortcomings” on the road to war and in its aftermath.

His team consisted of three knights and a baroness. One member wrote a speech for Blair justifying “humanitarian intervention”. Each was appointed as a safe pair of hands.

Some evidence was heard in secret “to ensure candour and openness from witnesses”.

“The millions who marched against war will not forget the war criminals’ hypocrisy

enough—that the establishment covered them up is appalling.

When Brittan was home secretary, he controlled Special Branch and increased its influence.

He oversaw both the violent uniformed policing of the 1984-85 Miners’ Strike and an undercover operation against workers.

The secret cops he ran took documents about child abusing MPs—and confiscated papers given to a journalist about him.

Perhaps now he is dead, the truth about Leon Brittan will

Chilcot said that it would not be “helpful” to discuss questions such as whether any of them had opposed the war.

The inquiry didn’t bother to ask any Iraqis what they think—and whatever the report says, no one will face any charges.

At best it will say that “mistakes were made” which they will “learn” from next time.

Some will claim they didn’t want to go to war but couldn’t stop it.

Meanwhile, Blair cavorts across the Middle East as a “peace envoy” and fervently backs further intervention in the region.

Those at the top hope that dragging out the report will blunt the rage that many feel about the Iraq war.

But the millions who marched against the war will never forget the lies and hypocrisy of the war criminals.

Stop the War will hold a protest as MPs debate the report’s timing **Time for truth about Iraq War—Protest Chilcot delay** 10.30am, Thursday 29 January London SW1P 3JY. It is also set to call a protest at parliament when Chilcot answers questions to the Foreign Affairs Committee

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ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



US depends on Saudi relationship

MANY WERE nauseated by the sight of the British government flying flags at half mast in honour of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, who died last week.

Honouring the head of a regime that practises public beheadings, flogs critics, and bans women from driving hardly fits the human rights commitment that Western governments have so noisily proclaimed, especially since the Charlie Hebdo killings. But the intimate relationship between the most powerful capitalist democracies and the Saudi autocracy is a longstanding one.

In 1945 US president Franklin Roosevelt met Joseph Stalin and Winston Churchill in Yalta in the Crimea to settle the division of Europe as the Second World War drew to a close.

On the way back, Roosevelt stopped off in Egypt to meet King Ibn Saud, the founder of Saudi Arabia, and two other Arab rulers. This reflected the importance Saudi Arabia was already assuming in the eyes of US planners.

A Department of State memo declared that Saudi oil reserves “constitute a stupendous source of strategic power and one of the greatest material prizes in world history”.

Roosevelt was determined to secure this prize for the US, shoving his ally Britain aside.

Lloyd Gardner writes in his book *Three Kings*, “British ambassador Lord Halifax was so upset over presumed threats to post-war British interests throughout the Middle East that he asked for an audience with Roosevelt to clear the air.

“When he arrived at the White House, FDR produced a rough map of the Middle East: ‘Persian [Iranian] oil, he told him, is yours. We share the oil of Iraq and Kuwait. As for Saudi Arabian oil, its ours.”

The basic power alignment between Washington and the Saudi capital Riyadh has remained unchanged ever since. If anything, the Saudi connection has become both more important for the US, but also more dysfunctional.

Unstable

The significance of Saudi Arabia as a secure source of oil has grown as the Middle East has grown more unstable. Today Iraq is a basket case, Iran is controlled by hostile Islamists, and the US had to wage a major war in 1991 to wrest Kuwait back from Saddam Hussein and protect the Saudis.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf sheikdoms have developed into an important centre of global capitalism, investing heavily in the advanced economies and the rest of the Middle East. Since the risings in Tunisia and Egypt four years ago, they have functioned as the main base of the counter-revolution.

The Saudi National Guard invaded neighbouring Bahrain in March 2011 to stop the revolution spreading there. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates between them pledged £8 billion to fund Field Marshal Abdel Fattah el-Sisi’s dictatorship.

This pillar of stability is based on the collective dictatorship of the Saudi royal family. The crown has been passed from one to another of Ibn Saud’s ageing sons, though, in an adventurous move, the deputy crown prince has now been chosen from among his grandsons.

This set up is legitimised by the ultra-purist Wahhabi version of Sunni Islam, which provided the ideological impetus for Ibn Saud’s conquest of the Arabian peninsula.

The influence of this ideology makes even the most modest attempts to modernise Saudi society very hard. Tony Blair called Abdullah “a patient and skilful moderniser”—high praise from an adviser to central Asian dictatorships.

Meanwhile, the Saudis have used the civil war in Syria both to extend their regional influence and weaken their great rival, the Islamic Republican regime in Iran. This has sent further shockwaves throughout the Middle East.

The beneficiaries have been the Sunni jihadis of Isis and Al Qaida. They share the Saudi regime’s ideology and copy many of its practices, but seek its overthrow. So the Saudis may suffer blowback from their meddling in Syria.

Little wonder that relations between the US and Saudi Arabia have cooled markedly in recent years.

But the dysfunctional partnership will continue since without it neither US domination of the Middle East nor the Saudi dynasty could survive.



ANTI-FASCISTS march against the racist English Defence League in Dudley in 2010

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

March in Oxford and Dudley to keep Nazis in the gutter

by ANNETTE MACKIN

ANTI-FASCISTS are organising to take to the streets.

Europe’s leading Nazi and leader of the French Front National, Marine Le Pen, is set to speak at the Oxford Union on Thursday 5 February.

Activists have leafleted mosques and organised in workplaces to build a Unite Against Fascism (UAF) demonstration opposing her.

Asad, a local taxi driver and president of the Oxford Muslim Society, told Socialist Worker that drivers are using their taxi networks to tell people about the demo.

He said, “I believe in freedom of speech and the right to be critical, but we’ve seen anti-Islam protests all across Europe and Islamophobia is growing.

“We need to challenge that.

“The issue of fascism affects all of us—the working class. The fascists are an obstacle in the way of workers’ rights.

“If you give them free rein they will try and manipulate a minority of people.”

Anti-fascists have been holding stalls and leafleting Islamic centres.

Local activist Julie said that 500 leaflets were handed out on one stall in the town centre last week.

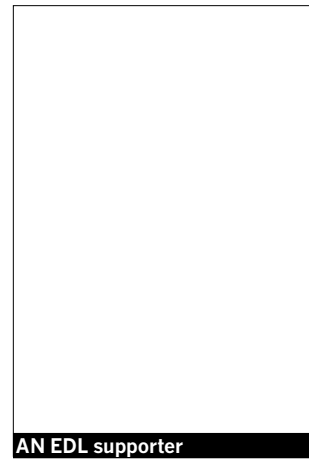
“It was buzzing,” she told

Socialist Worker. “Postal workers, health workers, bus drivers and students took bundles of flyers and stickers to build the demo.”

At Oxfordshire Unison healthcare branch over 100 workers voted at their AGM last week to support the rally and protest, and donated £500 to the demonstration.

And at Birkbeck College in London, the students’ union passed a motion supporting no platform for Le Pen, as well as providing a coach to the counter-demonstration.

It is extremely important



that Le Pen does not go unopposed.

Nazis are hoping for a boost in the wake of the Paris killings earlier this month and rising Islamophobia.

Two days after Le Pen plans to come to Oxford, the English Defence League (EDL) has called a protest in Dudley against the building of a “super mosque”.

Black Country UAF has called a counter-demonstration.

Backing

Wolverhampton university students are building the counter-demonstration on campus and trying to get students’ union backing.

Student Shaz Islam said, “Most students at the university are from the area.

“We’ve been making the argument that it’s really important people should always stand up to fascism.

“The EDL is clearly no longer the force it was and some people say that if we ignore it then it will go away.

“But even if it’s just two EDL members, we should oppose them.”

Join the UAF protest in Dudley, Saturday 7 February, 11am, Stone Street, Dudley DY1.

Sign the petition to rescind Le Pen’s invitation at

uaf.org.uk
Protest from 5pm on Thursday 5 February at the Oxford Union, Frewin Court, OX1 3JB if her speech goes ahead

UAF conference 2015

THE UNITE Against Fascism conference on 21 February will be a key event for anti-racists.

Far right and fascist groups advanced across Europe last year.

And this week Greek Nazis Golden Dawn came third in the general election.

In Britain we have seen the main parties and Ukip ramp up the scapegoating of migrants.

In the US fury at police

brutality and racism has seen tens of thousands march in cities across the country.

One session at the conference will look at how to keep racism

out of the general election, while another is on racism after the Paris shootings.

Others will discuss institutional police racism, fighting the racist Ukip party and building the anti-racist protests on 21 March.

For more information or to book your place go to uaf.org.uk

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Conference builds a left alternative to austerity

by NICK CLARK

ELECTION CANDIDATES and campaigners gathered in London for the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) conference last Saturday.

Over 280 people discussed how to pose a left challenge to the Tories and Labour in the run-up to general and local elections in May.

The falling support for mainstream parties shows the need to pose a united left alternative in the elections.

But there is also potential to build resistance.

Charlie Kimber from the Socialist Workers Party told the conference, “The acids of disillusionment and anger are dissolving the political establishment in Britain.”

“When you see Syriza win the elections in Greece on Sunday, the message that needs to go out from all of us is, if they can vote against austerity there, why can’t we vote against austerity here?”

He added, “We are not in the same position as Syriza and Podemos in Spain. There will be immense pressure on people to vote Labour to get the Tories out.”

“But by lively, vibrant and real campaigns we can get a vote which shows the potential in Britain.”

Many speakers talked about how they will use their election campaigns to strengthen resistance to austerity.

Islamophobia

Socialist Workers Party members and others underlined the need to confront racism and Islamophobia during the election campaign as well.

Bridget Parsons from Birmingham insisted that anti-racism was not an optional extra.

TUSC supporter Liz Kitching, who is standing in a parliamentary seat in Leeds Central, has been central to the local anti bedroom tax campaign.

She told the conference, “I fought the bedroom tax—that’s been my main political experience.”

“I’ll be standing in the spirit of getting people involved, and getting people to be part of the fightback.”

Robert Punton, Disabled People Against Cuts activist, will be standing in Birmingham.

He explained how he will use his experience as an activist to unite people in a fightback against austerity during his election campaign.

He said, “I have been a disabled activist for over 30 years. Disabled people are isolated and seen as part of the problem, not part of a solution.”

“The Tories, the Lib Dems and even Labour are dividing communities. We have to break down those barriers by working together.”

Candidates in Scotland explained the need to challenge the Scottish



SOME OF the TUSC candidates and their supporters at the conference

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

National Party (SNP) as well as Labour.

Edinburgh East candidate Ayesha Saleem said, “There are massive cuts being pushed through by Edinburgh council—and the council is run by the SNP and Labour.”

The conference heard from a number of former Labour councillors who have refused to back cuts and been forced out or left Labour to work with TUSC.

There was some debate at the conference on immigration controls.

A proposed amendment to TUSC’s general election policy sought to commit TUSC to a clear rejection of all immigration controls.

Socialist Workers Party members voted in favour of the motion, but it was defeated.

However, TUSC will still have the best position on anti-racism and immigration of any organisation in the election.

And candidates will use their campaigns to fight racism and Ukip.

Activists and campaigners left the conference ready to build lively campaigns across Britain that can begin to unite the left and build a genuine alternative to Labour.

For more go to tusc.org.uk

Meet a candidate

TRADE UNIONIST and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) candidates will stand in May’s general election to give an alternative to racism and austerity.

Angela McCormick is standing in Glasgow North for TUSC.

She told Socialist Worker that the argument to vote Labour to keep the Tories out doesn’t cut in Scotland, especially since both parties united to campaign against independence.

“That is not easily forgiven, Labour faces a wipeout,” she said. But Angela argued, “The Scottish National Party (SNP) and Labour are implementing council cuts.

“We can’t afford to wait. We need to encourage a fightback locally against cuts and expose the vile anti-immigrant racism and Islamophobia of the Tories,

Ukip and media.

“So building the Stand up to Racism and Fascism demo on 21 March is a big priority.”

Some on the left in Scotland have abstained from the general election campaign.

They back a vote for the SNP, believing it furthers the movement for Scottish independence.

“But it makes no sense to leave this election to the mainstream parties,” Angela said.

“We can combine the anger at austerity with the inspiration of the Yes movement and offer a real alternative.”

Angela McCormick

SCOTLAND

New bill will boost SNP support

TORY PRIME minister David Cameron announced new powers for Scotland last week.

He hopes his draft bill will be the “final resting place” for the constitutional arguments raised by the independence referendum.

But it will do nothing to undercut support for independence.

The bill is a pale shadow of the Smith Commission, itself a watered down version of the promises that all the main party leaders made in an effort to stop a Yes vote in September.

The STUC union federation criticised the bill as “unacceptable”.

The House of Commons retains a veto on many of the “devolved” powers. This has only handed more ammunition to the Scottish National Party (SNP) for May’s election.

The post referendum surge in support for the SNP and the disintegration of the Labour Party’s working class base both show no sign of fading.

Class

Polls still look grim for Scottish Labour’s new Blairite leader Jim Murphy. At best Labour is 10 percent behind the SNP, at worst it could be lucky to keep a handful of its 41 Westminster seats.

In the key battlegrounds in Labour’s traditional heartlands, where a SNP victory was once mere fantasy, Murphy is not inspiring party activists.

A leaked general election strategy document shows that in 14 key seats, including SNP targets in Glasgow and Lanarkshire, Labour has contacted fewer than 100 voters.

It’s good news for SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon, but her party does not present a serious challenge to austerity.

But it was fighting austerity that inspired many people to vote for independence.

FIGURE IT OUT

45%

Of people in Scotland voted Yes in last September’s independence referendum

85%

Turned out to vote in the referendum—the highest level in Britain

10%

How far at best Labour are trailing behind the SNP



Crackdown on march for Egypt's revolution

Government forces opened fire on people commemorating the 2011 revolution, writes **Charlie Kimber**

EGYPT'S STATE unleashed a bloody torrent of murders and arrests against peaceful protesters on the fourth anniversary of the Egyptian revolution last weekend.

The graphic images of the slaying of socialist activist Shaimaa el-Sabbagh have been shown around the world.

She was part of a small protest to lay a wreath in Cairo's Tahrir Square commemorating the people killed by the police and the government's allies during the revolution.

She was hit in the head as police fired birdshot ammunition, a supposedly non-lethal alternative to shot gun pellets, into the crowd.

She was one of at least 18 people killed at protests in Cairo, Giza, Kafr al-Sheikh and Menya.

Over 150 people were arrested.

Egypt's president Abdel Fattah el-Sisi overthrew the Muslim Brotherhood government in 2013.

He has presided over hundreds of death sentences and the imprisonment of tens of thousands of opponents.

El-Sisi is trying to crush all opposition through violence and terror. This has not stopped him receiving backing from the West.

Trembles

A statement from Egypt's Revolutionary Socialists said, "The regime trembles every time the anniversary of its great defeat in January 2011 approaches, when the Egyptian masses overthrew Hosni Mubarak and gave the thugs of the interior ministry a lesson they will never forget.

"No matter how often they try to deceive us and deceive the masses with their lying claims that January 2011 was a conspiracy, we see the revolution reflected in their fear as they mobilise hundreds of thousands of the interior ministry's thugs to prevent any mass movement on the anniversary, even if it was just a peaceful march with flowers.

"The interior ministry attacked

BACK STORY

The 2011 uprising in Egypt was the highlight of the Arab Spring

●Tens of thousands occupied Cairo's Tahrir Square. Despite repression they forced out dictator Hosni Mubarak

●Mohamed Mursi was elected president. But the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood which he headed undermined the revolution's gains

●Supporters of the old regime used mass protests against Mursi to regain influence. Once he was overthrown in 2013 the new regime of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi drowned the revolution in blood

just such a march by comrades from the Popular Socialist Alliance with bullets and birdshot, murdering the young poet, our comrade Shaimaa el-Sabbagh, a courageous daughter of Alexandria, who had long defended the rights of the workers.

"She dreamed of a future in a homeland of human dignity for her six year old son, Bilal.

"Sisi's regime denied Shaimaa and her comrades even this dream.

"We call on all those who believe in the revolution to unite their ranks in the face of this repressive authoritarian regime, which is leading this country into the abyss."

Trade unionists, campaigners and activists in Britain and across the world need to step up our solidarity with the opposition in Egypt, and demand the release of all prisoners.

Read the full statement from the **Revolutionary Socialists** at global.revsoc.me/2015/01/the-regime-of-cowards-murdered-shaimaa
The Arab Uprisings Four Years On, conference organised by Mena Solidarity, Egypt Solidarity Initiative and BahrainWatch, 6pm Friday 13 February and 10am Saturday 14 February. For details go to egyptsolidarityinitiative.org

A COMRADE tries to help the dying Shaimaa el-Sabbagh after she was shot by Egyptian state forces

PALESTINE

Strikes and protests after funeral death

PALESTINIANS IN Israel held a three-day general strike last week following the killing of a protester by Israeli police.

Police attacked a funeral procession in Rahat, southern Israel, with tear gas on Sunday of last week. One mourner, 43 year old Sami al-Zayadna was killed.

The funeral was for 22 year old Sami al-Jaar, who had been killed by Israeli police as he stood outside his house.

Local councils and grassroots committees representing the Palestinian minority in Israel called the strike.

Shops and businesses were closed across the Negev region,

and protests were held in Haifa, Jaffa, Beersheba and Rahat.

There were also protests by students at Tel Aviv University, Ben Gurion University, Haifa University and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Palestinians across Israel and inside occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank have joined a wave of protests.

They follow Israel's war on the Gaza Strip last summer.

Israel has clamped down on the protests, killing many people, including Palestinian Authority minister Ziad Abu Ein in December.

Nick Clark

Protest over death of Sami al-Zayadna

Government falls in Yemen

HOUTHIS fighters forced Yemen's president Abd-Rabbuh Mansour Hadi and government to resign last week.

The fighters have occupied much of the capital Sana'a since September last year.

The Houthis have been buffeted by complex regional politics.

In Yemen attempts at radical change repeatedly get pushed

into sectarian strife.

The population is Muslim—roughly two thirds Sunni and one third Shia.

The Houthis follow the Zaydi Shia sect.

The militia comes from the northern mountains that border Saudi Arabia.

Their name comes from Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, their leader who was killed in 2004 by

president Ali Abdullah Saleh's regime.

The Houthis fought Saleh during the Arab Spring in 2011. But their representatives were left out of the government after the president was forced to step down.

Saleh, in exile in Saudi Arabia, supports the current rebellion hoping it might help him return to power.

Houthi fighter in Sanaa

Belief not irrational

KEN OLENDE'S article on religion (Socialist Worker, 17 January) was a welcome antidote to much bile in the media.

I was, however, put off by his suggestion that capitalism's irrationality makes people turn to "irrational" ideas. He is free to hold this view. But to describe religion as irrational is patronising.

I have found the recent work of Marxists like Terry Eagleton and Slavoj Žižek on religion refreshing and fertile ground for further thought.

With advances in physics, "materialism" means something different now than it did in the 19th century when Karl Marx wrote.

Name withheld
Brighton

Government doesn't care

I WAS a support worker in mental health. Different agencies employed me on zero hours contracts, and I had to rely on public transport to travel all over South Yorkshire.

It was making me very ill. My doctor said I should pack in work because I was suffering with depression.

I claimed employment support allowance, but they wouldn't pay because my partner is working. He is employed by an agency on low wages.

Does the government want us to live on bread and water? It's time they were voted out.

Julie Ingram
Barnsley

Pensioners' Manifesto for the general election

BRITAIN'S PENSIONERS are not to blame for the crisis. Young and old share concerns over affordable housing, low incomes and retirement ages.

But growing older is a real challenge. Our state pension is among the least adequate in the developed world. Last winter over 30,000 pensioners died from the cold.

At the General Election we will call on candidates to support our Pensioners' Manifesto (see website for unedited version):

● A basic state pension for



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

Integration not segregation makes LGBT-friendly schools

THE WAY to make schools LGBT-friendly is integration, not segregation.

Children learn about difference from their experiences and by who surrounds them. Students in multicultural areas have a greater understanding as they are surrounded by people of different faiths, disabilities, genders, sexual orientations and gender identities.

Young people understand oppression—we educate them about human rights and discrimination. They find it utterly ludicrous that black and white people were segregated and women were not able to vote.

Education is key to eradicating all forms of discrimination.

The proposed Manchester LGBT school has the good intention of creating a safe space for LGBT people.

However, a school for LGBT students is not the solution. Segregating students who are perceived to be different only serves to make them the victim.

The solution is to make all schools LGBT-friendly.

Giving all teachers, staff and parents the confidence, training and resources to change ingrained attitudes can make positive institutional change.

The root of the problem is lack of education around LGBT law, people and history in our schools.

Bullying is the end product of

ignorance and invisibility.

Educate and Celebrate makes LGBT-friendly schools by delivering training to staff, updating policies, creating resources for an LGBT-inclusive curriculum, increasing visibility in the environment and engaging the community in events.

All our schools can be safe-spaces for everyone through adopting an LGBT-inclusive curriculum.

We know the answer is integration, when a teacher reports from their school "a real sense of solidarity, a mutual goal and being part of something bigger" after receiving training.

Elly Barnes
educateandcelebrate.org

Colonialism behind the conflict in Nigeria

BABA AYE'S article on the Baya massacre in Nigeria (Socialist Worker, 24 January) was interesting but doesn't give a historical perspective.

Imperialist invaders ignored existing kingdoms' boundaries in drawing up new nation states.

The current conflict can be traced directly back to British colonialism.

Colonial rule led directly to the Nigerian Civil War in the 1960s. At independence, there was a deliberate inclusion of corruption at the heart of the state and military.

Nigerian soldier

This included the north, where key areas of the state were given over to Hausa people who are generally Muslim. Sharia law exists in northern states and it is here that Boko Haram has its power

base, supported by elements in the ruling class.

There are large areas of industrialisation in the north too, in the oil and cotton industries. There have been efforts at change within Nigeria.

Regime change isn't the answer though, because notions of religion and tribe dominate. They exist in the trade union movement. The tragedy is that people remain divided while bigotry and oppression run amok.

Lesley Lancelott
Manchester

Just a thought...

Ukip's shifting health policy

NIGEL FARAGE of Ukip likes to make a virtue of not having defined policies.

This gives him wriggle room when his candidates make more bizarre statements.

But it's weird to see Ukip's own health spokeswoman disown Farage himself when he says he wants the NHS replaced by an insurance system.

Alison Liddle
by email

Many Greens are on the left

LOTS OF Greens other than Caroline Lucas are left wingers (Socialist Worker, 24 January). Do we support them where they are standing?

I can see that the Greens are a reformist party without any real connection to working class.

But my inclination is to vote Green because of their current policies and their better members. And it is a better protest vote than the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC).

Tim Parkin
on Facebook

Greens better than Labour

BETTER THE Green Party than the Labour Party. Actually, I'd back almost anyone over those sellout shysters.

Mark Stringer
on Facebook

Greens have more influence

THE GREENS are doing better than the SWP in terms of getting support for left wing policies. How about trying to work together?

Lecky Bill
on Twitter

US example for socialists

SOCIALIST Seattle councillor Kshama Sawant's 11 minute response to president Obama's State of the Union Address is progressive and constructive.

It points clearly to the alternatives that socialists can provide when they are allied with local grassroots activity.

Kevin McCaighy
York

GREECE FROM HOPE TO REAL CHANGE?

Dave Sewell reports from Athens on people's hopes for change after the election of the anti-austerity party Syriza. Photographs by Guy Smallman

AN ELECTORAL landslide for the radical left in Greece has sent shockwaves across Europe. The vote will strike fear in the hearts of bankers and bosses. But it will also give hope to workers living under the cosh of austerity everywhere.

The radical left Syriza party won 36 percent of the vote.

It humiliated the Tory New Democracy party that ran the last government—and the Labour-type Pasok that propped it up in coalition.

Their desperate campaign to sow panic about a Syriza victory failed.

One MP was widely mocked for warning that a Syriza victory would quickly mean toilet paper shortages.

The campaign headquarters for New Democracy and Pasok were moribund and almost empty when voting began last Sunday. Syriza's were a hive of activity, full of enthusiastic volunteers.

One of them was Mina, who joined Syriza as a student during the university occupations in 2010.

She told Socialist Worker, "I'm with Syriza because 70 percent of young people and 80 percent of young women can't get a job.

"Austerity means young people can't enjoy themselves. It's hard to go to university and make plans in life. Everyone understands, because everyone has the same problems. So when we go out campaigning everyone is really friendly—they support Syriza because they want some change in their lives."

It's not only the young. At a polling station in Exarchia, a working class district in central Athens, almost everyone told Socialist Worker they were voting Syriza.

Retired teacher and former Pasok voter Elli said, "I believe in Syriza. I don't have enough money to get by any more. I couldn't even buy a



Queueing to vote

birthday present for my grandchild. I'm hoping this will change that."

The effects of the crisis are visible everywhere in Athens, from the closed shops to the rough sleepers outside them.

In front of one government building eight people shot up heroin in just 15 minutes. Addiction has soared as social care has collapsed and hunger drives the poorest to desperation.

The blame doesn't stop with New Democracy and Pasok. The "Troika" of the European Central Bank (ECB), European Union and International Monetary Fund have overseen their budgets.

They have insisted that Greece pays the bill for bailing out the bankers.

This debt now dominates the Greek economy, and interest payments are as much as the government's budget.

And ECB chief Mario Draghi has insisted that Greece will be cut off from further credit if it doesn't agree to further massive cuts.

Faced with this blackmail, Syriza leader Alexis Tsipras said in his victory speech that the "vicious circle of austerity" is over. The vote had "cancelled out" the memorandum of austerity dictated by the Troika. It's exactly what many voters wanted to hear.

Nassia has been unemployed for two and a half years. She said, "We want to give someone else a chance, for Europe and for Greece. We don't have high expectations of Syriza. But if they even do half of what they say it will be a good start."

Her husband Vasilis added, "We want to say no to austerity measures—and to the bankers. It was sickening to see elected politicians in Europe last week waiting to hear what a banker would tell them they could do. No one elected the bankers, so why should they be in charge?"

Syriza's manifesto includes a number of pledges that, if met, will dramatically improve life for large

numbers of people. It has promised to boost the minimum wage to €751 (£563) a month—up more than a third—and to invest an extra €11 billion (£8 billion) in welfare.

Tsipras' plan to clamp down on tax avoiders will raise some of the money for this. But the key question will be whether he takes on the Troika.

Prominent anti-capitalists are part of Syriza, but it isn't an anti-capitalist party. And Tsipras gave several reminders of this in the run-up to the election, rolling back a number of Syriza positions.

The police are no longer to be disarmed. Instead they are "part of the working class" and will be given new equipment. The right for same sex couples to adopt has gone—apparently there are "contradictory opinions in the scientific community".

In his victory speech Tsipras never used the word "left" or even "Syriza", but repeatedly spoke of the "nation". One leading Syriza MP called the head of the army to reassure him of the "continuity of the state". And Syriza has no plans to shrink the defence budget or leave the Nato gang of imperialists.

The reason became clear early on Monday. Syriza had to find a coalition partner as it just missed the number of seats needed for a parliamentary majority. Not for the first time Tsipras went for the nationalist Independent Greeks—a racist, ultra-imperialist party that represents everything many Syriza voters hate.

It was a warning of the pressure to compromise that comes with trying to govern a capitalist economy.

There will be many tests ahead, with a deadline for a new bailout deal barely a month away. All eyes will be on Syriza to see if it kicks out the Troika or if Tsipras blinks first.

At the same time workers will have to keep fighting to make sure they get real change.



'It's a turning point for democracy and we need a revolution to finish it'

Workers resisting the cuts talk about their hopes for the new government

CELEBRATIONS erupted all over Greece after Syriza's victory became clear.

One of the most significant was in north Athens. This is where media workers were sacked when state broadcaster ERT closed in 2013, and who are now broadcasting under workers' control.

Their colleagues elsewhere are still occupying ERT property. This struggle helped push the last government to breaking point.

Producer Depi Vretou told Socialist Worker, "I'm happy at last.

"After 20 months of struggle it's very important to have this victory of the left. It's a great result not just for Greece but for the whole of Europe."

ERT worker Tasos said, "We've turned Greece to the left by about 30 degrees. Now I want to turn it 90 degrees left. We've made a turning point for democracy and we need a revolution to finish it."

Aglaia Kyritsi became the face of the ERT struggle when she presented its first report after being attacked by riot police. Now she has been elected as a Syriza MP.



Sacked government cleaner

“Struggle helped push the last government to breaking point

"The election doesn't mean struggle is over," she told Socialist Worker. "It just means I have to fight in parliament as well as here."

The European establishment is demanding Greece pays back the cost of the bankers' bailout, whatever the cost to ordinary people.

But Aglaia said, "Our first priority has to be the humanitarian crisis that austerity has caused, the misery and the poverty of people. "Without the people, the

economy may as well be dead. "The people won't give Syriza a 'blank cheque'. And they will be watching us closely every day."

Outside the ministry of finance sacked cleaners have picketed 24 hours a day for almost two years.

Giorgia Ekonomou told Socialist Worker, "The politicians never thought we would fight."

"But we are strong women. We had to be—most of us are over 50 and didn't think we would find other jobs."

"Tsipras will give us our jobs back. And if he doesn't, we will be right outside Syriza's HQ to keep protesting there."

ERT worker Irini Foteli stood for Antarsya in the election.

She told Socialist Worker, "We're happy to have a left government—and it can't call itself a left government if it doesn't reopen ERT and bring back our jobs."

"We're trying to organise a mass rally here to get back into the building."

Depi said, "It will be very difficult for Syriza. There will be many problems."

"But it's not just for Syriza to overcome them. It's for all of us."



AN EVE of election Syriza rally (main) Broadcasting in the workers controlled ERT station (above). Campaigning for Antarsya (right)



Fascists are still a threat

THE VOTE of the fascist Golden Dawn barely dropped since the last election.

This is despite its leadership being unmasked and jailed to await trial for masterminding violent attacks on migrants and the left.

Golden Dawn thugs loitered outside many polling stations to intimidate voters and the left.

In Keratsini, Syriza and Antarsya activists united to push the Nazis back into the protection of the police. Golden Dawn members murdered anti-fascist rapper Pavlos Fyssas there two years ago.

Student Giorgos told Socialist Worker, "People are very angry at the government. For some of them voting Golden Dawn is a way to tell them 'stop this or we will do something that really hurts you'."

"But this is a hardcore Nazi party and a threat to everyone. It needs to be stopped."

Pandelis Gavriliadis was leafleting for the anti-capitalist coalition Antarsya and for an upcoming demonstration against racism on 21 March.

He told Socialist Worker, "Last year Golden Dawn called an open air rally and 700 locals mobilised to stop it happening. The anti-fascist movement exposed Golden Dawn's leaders and got them jailed."

"That's why there are seven Golden Dawn people here today, rather than 20 like before."

"It's important that we don't let them intimidate us and that we build the anti-fascist movement."

Anti-capitalist vote doubles

THE GREEK Communist Party (KKE) and the anti-capitalist left coalition Antarsya both increased their vote.

The KKE's rhetoric is well to the left of Syriza. But instead of offering an alternative, it is cynical about winning change.

Antarsya, supported by the Socialist Workers Party (SEK) in Greece, almost doubled its vote since 2012. Over 100,000 workers voted for rejecting the debt and fighting back now. It was a vote against capitalism.

Antarsya has won a lot of support because it campaigns against racism.

Afghan refugee Nasruddin recently joined SEK and campaigned for Antarsya.

He said, "I came here fleeing war. But instead of peace I found the Golden Dawn and a government that locks up migrants in camps."

"Antarsya supports migrants so I support Antarsya."

Many who voted tactically for Syriza also back Antarsya.

Nurse Angela Georgakopoulou told Socialist Worker, "I voted Antarsya before and will probably vote Antarsya again. But I had to give Syriza its chance. We need a change."

But Vivi Pareskevi said, "Strikes are the only way out of a crisis this deep."

"We need more revolutionary voices to say that. That's why I voted Antarsya."

“The effects of the crisis are visible everywhere

WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7819 1170 for more information

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

YORK

The Arab revolutions four years on—revolution, repression and resistance

With Alex Callinicos (author of *The Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx*)
Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
Priory Street Community Centre, Denham Room,
Priory St, YO1 6EZ

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

ABERDEEN

The revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx

Thu 5 Feb, 7pm,
The Snug, Ma Cameron's,
6-8 Little Belmont St,
AB10 1JG

BARNSELEY

How do we stop climate change?

Thu 5 Feb, 6.30pm,
YMCA, Blucher St,
S70 1AP

BIRMINGHAM: CITY CENTRE

How do we fight Islamophobia and the rise of the far right across Europe?

Thu 5 Feb, 7pm,
Quaker Meeting House,
Priory Rooms,
40 Bull St, B4 6AF

BOLTON

Are Podemos and Syriza the future for the left?

Wed 4 Feb, 6.30pm,
Bolton Socialist Club,
16 Wood St (off Bradshawgate),
BL1 1DY

BRADFORD

After the Greek elections—has austerity worked in Greece?

Wed 4 Feb, 7pm,
Equity Centre, Perkin House,
82 Grattan Rd,
BD1 2LU

BRIGHTON

Who are the establishment and how can we fight them?

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Ship St, BN1 1AF

BRISTOL: NORTH

How radical are the Greens?

Thu 5 Feb, 7.30pm,
The Canteen, 5th Floor,
Hamilton House,
80 Stokes Croft,
BS1 3QY

BRISTOL: SOUTH

How radical are the Greens?

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
YHA, Narrow Quay,
BS1 4QA

CAMBRIDGE

Pride, politics and protest—a revolutionary guide to LGBT liberation

Thu 12 Feb, 7.30pm,
CB2 Cafe,
5-7 Norfolk St, CB1 2LD

CARDIFF

Neoliberalism and education

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
Cathays Community Centre,
Cathays Terrace, CF24 4HX

CHELMSFORD

A guide to Marxist economics

Thu 19 Feb, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Rainsford Rd, CM1 2QL

CHESTERFIELD

Syriza, the Greek elections and the fight against austerity

Thu 5 Feb, 7.30pm,
Market Halls,
Market Place, S40 1PB

COLCHESTER

Syriza, the Greek elections and the fight against austerity

Tue 3 Feb, 7.30pm,
The Odd One Out,
28 Mersea Rd, CO2 7ET

PUBLIC MEETINGS PROTEST ON SATURDAY 21 MARCH • STANDUPTORACISM.ORG.UK

Stand up to Racism

LONDON: KINGSTON

Thu 12 Feb, 6.30pm,
Kingston University,
Main Building, Room 34,
Penrhyn Rd, KT1 2EE

MANCHESTER

Wed 25 Feb, 6.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
6 Mount St, M2 5NS

SHEFFIELD

Tue 3 Mar, 7pm,
Central United
Reform Church,
60 Norfolk St, S1 2JB

Stand up to Racism— Stand up to Ukip



LEEDS

Tue 17 Feb, 7pm,
Leeds Civic Hall,
Calverley St,
LS1 1UR

LONDON: LEWISHAM

Tue 10 Feb, 7pm,
Goldsmiths University,
Room RHB 342,
Main Building,
Lewisham Way,
New Cross,
SE14 6NW

COVENTRY

Rebellion and oppression in China

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
West Indian Centre,
159 Spon St,
CV1 3BB

DERBY

Pride, politics and protest—a revolutionary guide to LGBT liberation

Thu 5 Feb, 7pm,
West End Community Centre, Mackworth Rd (next to Britannia Mill),
DE22 3BL

DUNCASTER

Syriza, the Greek elections and the fight against austerity

Wed 4 Feb, 7pm,
Women's Centre,
21 Cleveland St,
DN1 3EH

DUNDEE

Lessons from the 1917 February revolution in Russia

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
Dundee Voluntary Action,
10 Constitution Rd,
DD1 1LL

EDINBURGH

Syriza, the Greek elections and the fight against austerity

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
7 Victoria Terrace,
EH1 2JL

ESSEX

Is the economic recovery real?

Thu 5 Feb, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Rainsford Rd,
CM1 2QL

GLASGOW: NORTH

Syriza, the Greek elections and the fight against austerity

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
O'Neill's in Merchant Square,
71 Albion St,
G1 1NY

GLASGOW: SOUTH

After Rotherham scandal—what are the causes of sexual abuse?

Thu 5 Feb, 7.30pm,
Govanhill Baths,
99 Calder St,
G42 7RA

HARLOW

Have women achieved equality?

Thu 19 Feb, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
1 Church Leys,
CM18 6BX

HUDDERSFIELD

Do we need system change to stop climate change?

Wed 4 Feb, 6.30pm,
Brian Jackson House,
2 New North Parade (near train and bus stations),
HD1 5JP

IPSWICH

After Gaza—how can Palestine be free?

Tue 3 Feb, 7pm,
Labour Club,
33-35 Silent St,
IP1 1TF

KIRKCALDY

Syriza, the Greek elections and the fight against austerity

Mon 2 Feb, 7.30pm,
Betty Nicol's Pub,
297 High St,
KY1 1JL

LANCASTER

How do we fight fracking? Capitalism and the future of energy production

Thu 5 Feb, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Meeting House Lane,
LA1 1TX

LEEDS: CITY CENTRE

How can we explain the Holocaust?

Thu 5 Feb, 7pm,
The Swarthmore Education Centre,
2-7 Woodhouse Square,
LS3 1AD

LEICESTER

Syriza, the Greek elections and the fight against austerity

Wed 4 Feb, 7pm,
Leicester Adult Education College,
2 Wellington St,
LE1 6HL

LIVERPOOL

How radical are the Greens?

Wed 4 Feb, 7pm,
Brink Cafe,
21 Parr St (near Concert Square),
L1 4JN

LONDON: BRENT & HARROW

70 years after the liberation of Auschwitz—why we say never again

Thu 5 Feb, 7.30pm,
The Peppercot Centre,
1a Thorpe Close,
Ladbroke Grove (very close to the station), W10 5XL

LONDON: BRIXTON

The Holocaust—what are the lessons for socialists?

Wed 4 Feb, 7pm,
Vida Walsh Centre,
2b Saltoun Rd (near Effra Rd, facing Windrush Square), SW2 1EP

LONDON: CAMDEN

Syriza, the Greek elections and the fight against austerity

Thu 5 Feb, 7pm,
Theatro Technis,
26 Crownndale Rd, NW1 1TT

LONDON: EALING

The Labour Party and the trade unions—has the link been broken?

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
W3 Gallery,
185 High St, Acton, W3 9DJ

LONDON: HACKNEY

LGBT liberation—are we there yet?

Thu 5 Feb, 7.30pm,
The Round Chapel,
2 Powerscroft Rd (corner Lower Clapton Rd), E5 0PU

LONDON: HORNSEY AND WOOD GREEN

Black British Rebels—figures from working class history

Wed 4 Feb, 7.45pm,
West Indian Cultural Centre,
9 Clarendon Rd,
Haringey, N8 0DD

LONDON: ISLINGTON

Capitalism and climate change

Thu 5 Feb, 7pm,
The Old Fire Station,
84 Mayton St,
N7 6QT

LONDON: KINGSTON

Can the Tories abolish the welfare state?

Wed 4 Feb, 7pm,
Kingston Quaker Centre,
Fairfield East,
KT1 2PT

LONDON: LEWISHAM

What do socialists say about the European Union?

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
West Greenwich Community and Arts Centre,
141 Greenwich High Rd (near Greenwich main line and DLR Station),
SE10 8JA

LONDON: NEWHAM

What is class and why does it matter?

Wed 4 Feb, 7pm,
Stratford Advice Arcade,
107-109 The Grove (next to Morrisons car park),
E15 1HP

LONDON: SOUTHWARK

Isis and counter revolution—a Marxist analysis

Thu 5 Feb, 7pm,
The Grand Union, Snug Room,
26 Camberwell Grove (off Camberwell Church St),
SE5 8RE

LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS

Not just opium? Marxism and religion

Wed 4 Feb, 7pm,
Oxford House,
Derbyshire St (opp Bethnal Green Rd Tesco), E2 6HG

LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST

How do we fight Islamophobia and the rise of the far right across Europe?

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
Quaker Meeting House,
1a Jewel Rd (off Hoe St),
E17 4QU

MANCHESTER CITY CENTRE

Pride, politics and protest—a revolutionary guide to LGBT liberation

Thu 5 Feb, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
6 Mount St, M2 5NS

MANCHESTER: CHORLTON

Climate change—how can we stop capitalism destroying the planet?

Wed 4 Feb, 7pm,
Proof bar,
30 Manchester Rd,
M21 9PH

MEDWAY

How real is the economic recovery?

Thu 5 Feb, 7.30pm,
Riverside Creative Hub,
Conference Room,
13 Military Rd,
Chatham, ME4 4JG

NEWCASTLE

How radical are the Greens?

Thu 12 Feb, 7pm,
The Labour Club,
11 Leazes Park Rd,
NE1 4PF

NORWICH

From Civil Rights to Ferguson—the legacy of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X

Thu 5 Feb, 7.30pm,
Vauxhall Centre, Johnson Place, NR2 2SA

NOTTINGHAM

How radical are the Greens?

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
International Community Centre,
61b Mansfield Rd, NG1 3FN

OXFORD

How radical are the Greens?

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
Restore,
Manzil Way (off Cowley Rd),
OX4 1YH

PORTSMOUTH

Revolutionaries and elections

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
Somerstown Central,
Rivers St, PO5 4EZ

ROTHERHAM

Is revolution possible?

Wed 18 Feb, 7pm,
Bridge Inn,
Greasbrough Rd (near bus and train stations), S60 1RB

SHEFFIELD

Isis and counter revolution—a Marxist analysis

Thu 5 Feb, 7.30pm,
Central United Reformed Church,
60 Norfolk St (near Crucible Theatre),
S1 2JB

SOUTHAMPTON

Rich versus poor—the British economy today

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
High Street Cafe,
153 High St,
SO14 2BT

SWANSEA

Are Syriza and Podemos the way forward for the left?

Thu 5 Feb, 7.30pm,
Brynmill Community Centre,
St Albans Rd,
SA2 0BP

WIGAN

Pride, politics and protest—a revolutionary guide to LGBT liberation

Wed 4 Feb, 7pm,
Sunshine House Community Centre,
Bradshawgate, Vauxhall Rd,
Scholes, WN1 3LU

WOLVERHAMPTON AND WALSALL

Syriza, the Greek elections and the fight against austerity

Wed 4 Feb, 7.30pm,
Grain Store,
King St, WV1 1ST

YORK

What does imperialism look like today?

Wed 11 Feb, 7.30pm,
Sea Horse Hotel,
4 Fawcett St,
YO10 4AH

Wolf Hall—putting class back into Tudor intrigue

The new adaptation of Hilary Mantel's *Wolf Hall* lives up to the hype and gives us an insight into the ferment of 16th century Britain, writes **Sasha Simic**

THE BBC'S adaptation of Hilary Mantel's award winning novel *Wolf Hall* (2009) has arrived on our screens.

It's been heralded by an enormous wave of promotion and expectation—but could any production live up to the hype?

The Tory press felt obliged to print something negative about the first episode.

After all, Mantel had offended their patron saint with the publication of *The Assassination of Margaret Thatcher* last year.

So The Daily Mail newspaper feebly grumbled about its "murky" lighting, before admitting that it's a great drama.

This adaptation builds on the solid foundation of Mantel's novels.

In *Wolf Hall* and *Bring Up the Bodies* (2012), Mantel tells the familiar story of Henry VIII's and Catherine of Aragon's protracted divorce from a fresh perspective.

Established

The established narrative casts Henry's chief minister, Thomas Cromwell, as the brute behind the Reformation.

He's seen as the destroyer of England's monastic culture, and the pragmatic schemer behind the executions of such saintly defenders of the old feudal order as Thomas More.

Mantel doesn't see it that way.

Her Cromwell is part of the vanguard of the emerging capitalist class. In the period *Wolf Hall* is set, England was still a feudal society.

It was ruled by an aristocratic elite whose wealth came from the land they held and the peasants who



HENRY VIII'S chief minister Thomas Cromwell (Mark Rylance) is the hero in Hilary Mantel's Tudor drama

worked it.

But new ways of acquiring wealth through trade and speculation were eroding the old order.

That threw up a new class, which could advance up the social ladder through its own business efforts rather than advantages of birth.

Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, Cromwell's patron, was a butcher's son who rose up to become lord chancellor of England, the most politically powerful figure aside from the king.

Thomas Cromwell was the son of a Putney brewer and blacksmith, but also became chancellor and then Earl



Damian Lewis as Henry VIII

of Essex. He could aspire to transform his society into a more tolerant and rational one.

For Mantel, Cromwell is the hero of the sordid history that's unfolding—a vanguard of progress against a decadent elite. But for all his social climbing, it was still an England under aristocratic rule.

Wolf Hall is beautifully filmed and performed. And it's funny. "Why do you have to be such a...person?" asks the arrogant Duke of Norfolk, unsettled by Cromwell's lack of deference.

When Cromwell is invited to dine with his arch enemy Thomas More, he's forced to listen to the pious More denounce Wolsey's ambition.

But Cromwell shoots back, "You've become lord chancellor. What's that, a fucking accident?"

Watch *Wolf Hall*—because it does live up to the hype.

Wolf Hall

Directed by Peter Kosminsky.
BBC Two.
9pm, Wednesdays

A robot movie that doesn't quite break the mould

FILM

EX MACHINA

Directed by Alex Garland
Universal
Out now

THIS TENSE science fiction thriller looks at artificial intelligence (AI) using just four characters set in one location.

Caleb (Domhnall Gleeson) is a young programmer working for the world's biggest internet company—a cross between Google and Facebook.

He wins a competition to spend a week at the

mountain retreat of his boss, Nathan (Oscar Isaac), who's a computer genius and reclusive loner.

He's creepy and unpleasant from the start, weaving between sweaty boxing workouts and drunken binges.

But Caleb soon finds out that the real purpose of his stay is to test out Nathan's latest AI attempt.

And, wouldn't you know it, this AI is encased in the robotic form of an attractive young female.

It's just Caleb's type, and quite possibly based on his search preferences.

Nathan watches on



Domhnall Gleeson as Caleb

monitors as Caleb tries to perform the Turing Test on "Ava", which is meant to determine whether the AI can pass for a human.

The film effectively builds an atmosphere of tension and mistrust

between these three characters.

Alex Garland's use of sets, special effects and choice of actors on a small budget are all excellent.

But his ideas are less interesting. Nathan and Caleb's discussions on AI are vaguely stimulating (the sort you might have with a friend who's read Ludwig Wittgenstein and gets his classical references).

They cover questions of language, sexuality, and objectification. And Garland clearly sees sexual objectification as a theme of his film. What does it mean to determine

that Ava is only simulating desire, rather than really experiencing it, in a world awash with internet porn?

Garland doesn't bring anything new to the table.

He simply follows in the long tradition of fembot films, where masters create sexy female forms to their specifications, who then turn against them.

While enjoyable, it isn't advancing debates on AI but telling an old story of gender stereotypes in a slightly new way

Sally Campbell
Longer version at
socialistworker.co.uk

MUSIC

PJ HARVEY: RECORDING IN PROGRESS

Somerset House,
London WC2R 1LA.
Tickets £15, concessions £12
somersethouse.org.uk

WHEN TICKETS went on sale in January, they were sold out within minutes.

But PJ Harvey has added more sessions to this event.

In this project, Harvey will record her ninth album in an architectural installation which is open to the public.

Make sure to book before tickets sell out again.

EXHIBITION

STANLEY SPENCER: HEAVEN IN A HELL OF WAR

Manchester Art Gallery,
Manchester M3 4PR
Until 1 March.
Free.
manchestergalleries.org

THIS EXHIBITION looks at the work of painter Stanley Spencer, who was a soldier during the First World War.

His emphasis is on everyday life, rather than horrific war scenes.

Spencer reacted to the



Kit Inspection, Stanley Spencer

horrors of war by looking inwards towards spiritual redemption.

This is reflected in the renaissance style he adopted.

It might not be the anti-war art of CRW Nevinson, who was censored by the government.

But it adds to an important debate on the First World War and art.

LIVE EVENTS

SLEATER-KINNEY TOUR

Somerset House.
Venues in London, Manchester and Glasgow.
From 23 March to 25 March
Tickets from £27.
sleater-kinney.com

AS PART of their 2015-2016 tour, Sleater-Kinney will be playing three dates in Britain.

The band reunited last year with the release of their latest album *No Cities to Love*.

They were a key part of the Riot Grrrl movement, which blended punk rock with feminism and left wing politics.

A vicious reaction-ary—racist and brutal. That is the epitaph of Winston Churchill.

But the ruling class is desperate for us to celebrate a myth. From stained glass windows to stamps—the nauseating commemoration of Churchill 50 years after his death is underway.

Leading the charge is Tory London mayor Boris Johnson who recently published a biography of Churchill just in time to cash in.

He declared that Churchill was, “the best for work rate, for rhetorical skills, for humour, for insight, for technical originality and sheer blind bravery.”

David Cameron has spoken of how Churchill is his “favourite” prime minister.

As those at the top queue to doff their hats to the dead Tory they tell us that he was the great resister of tyranny.

They argue that he inspired people to rise up against the fascism during the Second World War through the sheer power of his speeches.

This is a lie. Churchill was not an anti-Nazi hero, he was a staunch defender of his class—and expressed admiration for fascist leaders.

Speaking to Italian fascist dictator Benito Mussolini in Rome in 1927 he said, “Your movement has rendered a service to the whole world.

“If I had been an Italian I should have been wholeheartedly with you from start to finish in your triumphant struggle against the bestial passions of Leninism.”

What motivated many people to fight Adolf Hitler was vastly different to the motivations of Churchill.

During the war he wasn’t against Hitler because he was a Nazi. It was because Hitler threatened British ruling class interests.

He wrote that Hitler “had a perfect right to be a patriotic German if he chose. I also wanted England, Germany and France to be friends”.

CHURCHILL was a skilful representative of the interests of his class, and he led the battle inside the ruling class to enter the war to defend such interests.

Throughout the war the radicalism of the resistance movements proved a real threat to those at the top.

As Donny Gluckstein put it, “The Allies fought for imperialism—their imperialism against a rival imperialism.

“The masses fought against imperialism (of the Axis variety). They frequently discovered that this brought them into conflict with Allied imperialism too.”



CHURCHILL A RACIST? —OH YES!

Fifty years since the death of Winston Churchill is fawned over by politicians, Annette Mackin looks at the real legacy of one of the greatest Britons after Mr Bean

This is why Churchill made moves to undermine resistance movements.

In Greece most of the population wanted to see the back of the pro-fascist king—but Churchill had other ideas. He rearmed the fascist troops and British soldiers took on the resistance.

In the half century since his death the truth is slowly emerging about the extent of Churchill’s role in many atrocities.



Churchill was a skilful representative of his class

aware of the situation and refused to send emergency famine relief. Instead he said Indians were used to starving.

His racism didn’t stop there. He said, “I hate Indians. They are a beastly people with a beastly religion.”

He also thought that Hindus were a foul race “protected by their mere pullulation [fast breeding] from the doom that is their due”.

But Churchill’s tyranny wasn’t only felt in India. In 1951 the Egyptian government demanded the British evacuate and end an occupation of the country.

The then Labour government responded with force—putting more troops into Egypt in an attempt to intimidate the Egyptians.

When Churchill was re-elected in the same year, repression escalated significantly.

Troop levels rose to some 80,000 and a brutal policy on Egyptian guerilla attacks was authorised.

A month after his election a British commander ordered a village to be almost completely levelled because snipers used it to harass the Suez water filtration plant.

Such action against forces that threatened Britain’s imperial interests was not new to Churchill. In 1920 he ordered the RAF to use poison gas against Kurdish rebels in north Iraq.

He said, “I do not understand this squeamishness about the use of gas. I am strongly in favour of using poison gas against uncivilised tribes.”

This was the first use of chemical weapons in Iraq.

AT THE same time as he was ordering rebels be gassed in Iraq Churchill was playing a key role in the war being waged on Irish people fighting British rule.

He was secretary of state for war when Britain formed the paramilitary “Black and Tans” and the Auxiliaries in Ireland.

This was to strengthen the role of the police against Republicans.

The Tans and the Auxiliaries became a byword for brutality—for rape and murder.

These gangs rampaged across the country carrying out reprisals against insurrection.

But Churchill described them as “honourable and gallant officers”.

He took the officer in charge of the murder gangs, major general Henry Tudor, to meet prime minister Lloyd George, saying he would stick with him through thick and thin.

Just as Churchill fought fiercely against those who threatened his class internationally, he waged a war at home against the working class in Britain.

In 1911 transport workers including dockers, seafarers,

railway and tram workers walked out on strike for better pay, conditions and for union recognition.

Their action sent shockwaves through the ruling class. Churchill said, “Accounts from Liverpool show that the situation there is more like revolution than a strike.”

He sent in unprecedented military enforcements to rail bosses in response. A gun boat, HMS Antrim, was positioned in the river Mersey.

More than 50,000 troops were mobilised across Britain. They opened fire on civilians in Liverpool. Two workers, John Sutcliffe and Michael Prendergast, were killed.

Five days later two more civilians were shot in Llanelli. These are the last occasions in history when British soldiers killed civilians on the streets of Britain.

Just a year earlier Churchill sent troops to threaten striking miners in Tonypandy in Wales.

His government immediately acted to whitewash what had happened.

No inquiry was called and parliament was adjourned to stop any awkward questions arising.

ONE OF the biggest myths about Churchill, other than his supposed anti-fascist credentials, is that he was a leader dear to the people.

The main celebrations to commemorate Churchill will take place on the anniversary of his state funeral—an attempt to appeal to the idea of his popularity.

It’s true that he has often been polled as the greatest Briton—but then again, last year he was beaten by Mr Bean.

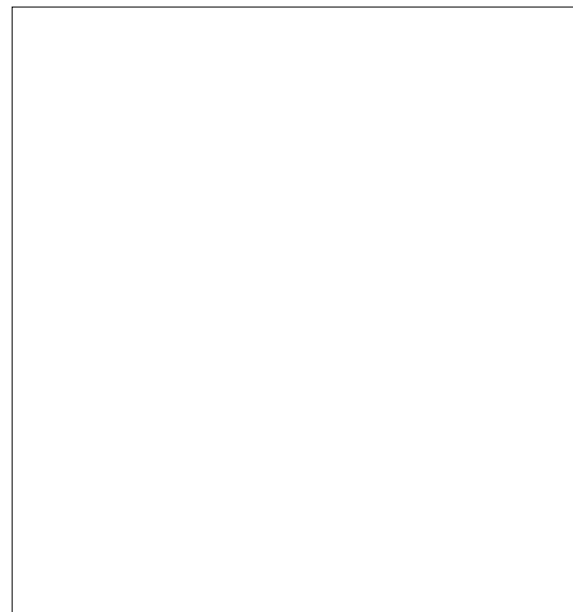
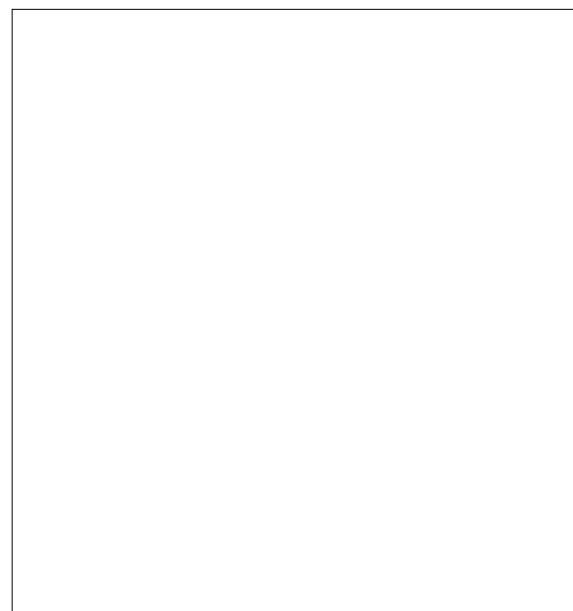
A real example of his popularity among working people can be seen when he came to address east Londoners at Walthamstow stadium in 1945.

Some 20,000 people jeered him.

When he went to Ladbroke Grove in west London the same year he was pelted with stones.

Churchill was 90 when he finally died. In his lifetime he played a key role in major events that are still playing out today.

He was a fierce opponent of any sort of freedom for Palestinians, and his actions in north Iraq are still felt. When



Black and Tan soldiers in Ireland (top) and British troops in Greece both sent by Churchill (below) to crush revolt

he is commemorated he is celebrated for everything he stood for—imperialism, oppression and deep hatred of the working class.

We have to fight against the myth of Churchill and those that seek to emulate him.



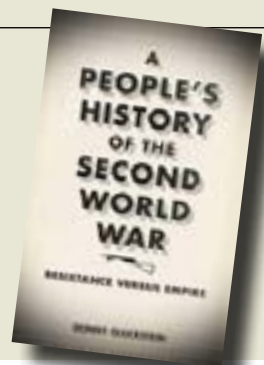
READ MORE

●A People’s History of the Second World War: Resistance Versus Empire Paperback by Donny Gluckstein

●Churchill’s Secret War: the British Empire and the Ravaging of India during the Second World War by Madhusree Mukerjee

●The Blood Never Dried: A People’s History of the British Empire by John Newsinger.

Available at Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to www.bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



WHAT SOCIALISTS SAY

Should fascists be allowed freedom of speech?

THE OXFORD Union—a talking shop for toffs at Oxford University—has invited Marine Le Pen, leader of the fascist French Front National (FN), to speak on 5 February.

Unite Against Fascism (UAF) has called a demonstration outside the venue to stop the event from going ahead.

Socialist Worker believes that Nazis should never be allowed to speak publicly or organise openly.

People opposing this view say that no one should be denied freedom of speech, and that the best way to expose fascists is through rational debate. But Nazis are not interested in debate. They are not like other political forces—or even other racist parties such as Ukip.

Wherever Nazis are allowed the space to organise, they will build a hard core of street-fighting thugs. These will carry out murderous attacks on ethnic minorities and the left and physically attempt to take control of the streets.

The most obvious example of this is Adolf Hitler’s Nazi party in the 1930s. Their army of “storm troopers” attacked Jewish people on the streets and smashed up meetings of trade unions, social democrats and communists.

Smother

That is not true of all racist parties. So for instance the racism of Ukip is vile and it should be opposed. But Ukip is not out to smother democracy and smash workers’ organisation.

To attempt this today, Nazis need the veneer of respectability that participating in debate can give them. So Marine Le Pen currently claims that the FN’s fascist connections are in the past.

Fascists lie about their ideas and aims in order to pull soft racists around them.

This in turn gives hardened fascists the confidence to launch a campaign of violence and intimidation on the streets.

In the early 1990s the British National Party (BNP) was able to organise around a bookshop which served as their headquarters in Welling,

MARINE AND Jean-Marie Le Pen try to hide FN’s Nazi roots

BACK STORY

●The Front National was set up by a hardcore of traditional Nazis. It moved towards electoral respectability, but kept links with violent extra-parliamentary groups

●Former leader Jean-Marie Le Pen called Nazi death camps a “mere detail of history”

●His daughter Marine Le Pen has cultivated a less extreme image since she took over. But she has compared Muslims praying in the street to the Nazi occupation of France

south London.

This led directly to a series of racist attacks in the area, culminating in the murder of black teenager Stephen Lawrence.

It was people being prepared to challenge them on the streets and expose them as fascists that pushed the Nazis back.

In 2009, presenting himself as a respectable politician after his election to the European Parliament,

Fascists lie about their aims in order to pull soft racists around them

BNP leader Nick Griffin was invited onto BBC’s Question Time.

UAF and other campaigners fought hard to keep him off the air. But the debate went ahead. Griffin was humiliated on the programme as his racist and bigoted arguments were torn apart. But that night a record 3,000 people reportedly joined the BNP.

The BNP is now a shadow of what it was in 2009. But this was because of activists campaigning to smash it—not because it was defeated in debate.

The failure of the French left to do the same has allowed the FN to grow into a significant political force.

Of course, Le Pen is not trying to organise in Britain. But her appearance at the Oxford Union can help revitalise to Nazis who are.

Two days after Le Pen is due to speak, the racist English Defence League (EDL) plans to march in Dudley.

UAF will be organising a counter demonstration there too. Like the BNP, the EDL has been kept in the gutter by anti-fascist campaigning.

But it still has the potential to grow amid a toxic atmosphere of Islamophobia and racist scapegoating. A success for them in Dudley could give their dying organisation a shot in the arm.

Fascists will take any freedom they are offered and use it to rampage through the streets as the EDL did in its heyday.

That’s why everyone who hates racism and fascism should join the UAF protests.

Nuclear protest surrounds ministry

by TOMÁŠ TENGELY-EVANS

UP TO 2,000 people marched through London last Saturday against the renewal of Britain's Trident nuclear weapons.

The government has tried to push discussion of the £100 billion project into the next parliament.

But the Scottish National Party, Plaid Cymru and Green Party forced a vote with an opposition day debate last week.

Only 37 out of 401 MPs who attended voted against renewal.

The Labour Party leadership supported renewal, while most Labour MPs abstained—only 19 voted against. The last time there was a vote on Trident in 2007, 95 Labour MPs rebelled against the then Labour government.

Protesters assembled for the Wrap Up Trident protest where they symbolically surrounded Ministry of Defence (MoD) with a seven-mile long knitted scarf.

They then marched down to parliament to chants of "Wrap up Trident—ban the bomb now".

The angry demonstration, called by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), attracted many people new to politics.

Laura got involved after the



Protesters outside the Ministry of Defence

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

BACK STORY

● Each of Britain's 160 Trident nuclear missiles is 24 times more powerful than the bomb that destroyed Hiroshima

● The Trident missile and submarine system that Britain bought from the US in the 1980s is becoming obsolete

● The government wants to renew it. Through its lifetime the new system will cost an estimated £100 billion

● The coalition fell out over Trident because the Tories want four replacement submarines and the Lib Dems want three

New Era housing protests in Hackney, east London. "I've only been involved for four months, but nuclear weapons make me so angry," she told Socialist Worker.

"How many people in government are set to benefit from arms deals?"

Protesters made links with the fight against austerity. A group of students came from Essex

University. Josh said, "Trident is undoubtedly the biggest waste of money."

"We should be spending it on things such as welfare and using it to fund free education—a major issue for students."

But the biggest issue was the NHS, and placards included, "A&E not WMD [Weapons of Mass Destruction]" and "Nurses not Nukes".

Rebecca, a college student from Hertfordshire, said, "I've got a lot of family who work in the NHS and lots of people need to access health care but can't get it."

Many people were also furious about Labour. Laura said, "I now support the Green Party because I want a real left, not a pretend left like Labour".

This shows how Trident can strike a chord in the run-up to the general election.

Marchers held a rally next to parliament.

Speakers included Kate Hudson from CND, Jeremy Corbyn MP, Heather Wakefield from Unison, Lindsey German from Stop the War, Shahrar Ali from the Green Party and Khalil Charles from the Muslim Association of Britain.

cnduk.org

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Lambeth shows that bosses can be beaten

Lambeth College workers in south London have scored an important victory in a dispute which saw them strike for 42 days. They spoke to **Sadie Robinson** about their experience

STRIKES CAN win. That's the lesson from Lambeth College, where workers scored a victory last week following a ten-month dispute involving 42 days on strike.

Striker Frank told Socialist Worker, "I didn't think we could gain so much. It isn't just gaining in terms of contracts—we've now got friends across Britain all involved in struggle."

"We've grown as a union branch. And we've shown it is possible to fight a campaign that at times felt impossible."

College principal Mark Silverman wanted all workers to accept a new, worse contract—but the strikes stopped him (see box below).

Attacks

"I'm amazed that existing staff have lost absolutely nothing," said Frank.

"If we face attacks now, we won't let it stand. There is confidence among people now."

Strikers toured Britain to raise solidarity for their struggle. The dispute opened their eyes to other issues—and meant they questioned things more too.

Juliet was on strike at the Brixton site of the college. "I have changed because of it," she told Socialist Worker.



COLLEGE STAFF go back to work at the Vauxhall site

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

"I was nervous speaking at union meetings at first. By the end I really enjoyed it."

"Now I'm more interested in other disputes. And I'm always thinking, why isn't the mainstream media covering this?"

Strikers said the action was sometimes hard, but that it was worth fighting.

Striker Johnny told

Socialist Worker, "I've lost friends over this dispute."

"You realise that the things that matter to you don't necessarily matter to other people."

"But you can't change the things you hold dear in life."

"I've got such a bond with everyone I've been out on strike with, and with our supporters too."

Many strikers plan to be more active in other campaigns.

Striker Nadia told Socialist Worker, "I'm going to speak at a Barnsley College rally next week as they start their strike."

"It's important to go, especially at the start, to give people encouragement that they're doing the right thing."

Nadia said the strike has made her look at the world in a different way.

"Now I believe it's not good enough when people think about themselves and not the bigger picture," she said.

"It's not good enough when people complain about things being too political. Everything is political."

'We're ready for the next fight'

THE STRIKE was a real education. All of us were in awe at how people responded nationally to our strike.

People were urging us on to win—not just for ourselves but for them as well.

My favourite donations were the individual £5 or £10 notes with a simple message: "keep going".

We kept the strike alive by organising activities.

This included teach-ins, putting up posters round local shops and social media.

It meant everyone had a role so the strike belonged to all of us.

We had visitors to our picket lines and we went to speak at workplaces. And we kept everyone informed with daily emails and strike meetings.

So every time we got an injunction or had to re-ballot, everyone knew the ins and outs.

When you make decisions, they need to be taken together. We did that well. We've gone back to work in excellent shape ready to take on the next fight.

Mandy Brown, branch secretary Lambeth College UCU



Union activist Mandy Brown

What have workers won?

LAMBETH COLLEGE principal Mark Silverman wanted to impose new contracts on all staff that slashed sick pay, cut holidays and imposed longer hours.

He failed. The new contract won't be imposed on those who were employed at the start of the dispute. Some 430 out of 530 workers have had their conditions fully protected.

This applies to permanent, hourly-paid and fixed-term staff even if they change their working hours in the future.

Strikers had wanted to stop the contracts being imposed on new staff too. But



College boss Mark Silverman

the deal won concessions on sick pay and working hours.

Bosses used the law to block strikes and threatened more legal action—forcing several reballots for strikes. Silverman refused to talk to the union and sent letters attacking strikers.

The workers' UCU union ultimately failed to deliver the support workers needed.

Yet workers kept fighting. They struck for over five

weeks last summer and for 42 days in total throughout the ten-month dispute.

Ordinary people backed them—donating tens of thousands of pounds to their strike fund.

Battle over observations

WORKERS AT Lambeth College are boycotting lesson observations.

A previous policy gave workers notice of which lesson would be inspected and information about what the observer would look for.

Now inspections can happen at any time during a certain period.

This piles even more stress and paperwork onto workers.

Striker Alan told Socialist Worker, "It's not supportive—it's just a stick for management to beat people with. And it will make it easier for bosses to victimise workers."

Lambeth workers are determined to keep fighting to improve conditions for new staff.

Alan said, "Silverman will try and

dress up the outcome of the strike to save face. But he won't convince anybody. People who didn't feel confident to strike will now see that fighting gets results."

And if college managers say there is no money for students and staff, one cut that would be acceptable is less pay for those at the top.

Figures released during the dispute revealed that principal Mark Silverman grabbed a 13 percent pay rise in 2012/13—the highest rise of any college principal in London.

Nadia told Socialist Worker, "I'm really proud to have been part of this movement."

"We can go back with our heads held high and go to our staff rooms and shout, 'We won!'"

IN BRIEF

ITV workers reject 2 percent pay offer

WORKERS IN the NUJ, Bectu and Unite unions at ITV have rejected a 2 percent pay increase from bosses.

The results show that 85 percent of members in the NUJ, 86 percent in Bectu and 78 percent in Unite voted against the offer. Unions will now re-enter talks but say they will ballot for strikes if management don't budge.

Solid vote for strike on Woolwich ferry

SHIP CREW, electricians and road traffic teams who run the Woolwich ferry service in London have voted by 100 percent for strikes.

The Unite union members are in dispute over pay, the use of agency staff and the operator Briggs Marine's interpretation of sick pay policy. Talks were set for Wednesday of this week.

Subcontractor ISS faces staff walkout

CLEANERS, porters, caterers and clerical staff at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Woolwich, south London, are set for five days of strikes after a decision by their GMB union regional executive.

The workers demand the same pay, weekend and unsocial hours rates from their employer, subcontractor ISS, as directly employed NHS staff. Strike dates are yet to be announced.

Anti-fascists set to mobilise in Wales

UNITE AGAINST Fascism (UAF) Wales is organising a counter demonstration against the fascist Welsh Alliance in Newport, South Wales, on Saturday 31 January.

The demonstration will assemble at 11am on Commercial Road in Newport. It is supported by the Muslim Council of Wales, the Islamic Society of Wales and the Wales TUC.

Student protest to target Labour Party

A NATIONAL student demonstration has been called for 28 March in Birmingham by the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts and is supported by other student groups.

The protest will demand that the Labour Party pledges to bring in free education if it wins May's election. Local free education demos were also set to take place in Sheffield on Friday of this week, and in Brighton this Saturday.

●The Student Assembly Against Austerity conference is in London this Saturday thestudentassembly.org.uk

●Four victimised Sussex University student activists to receive compensation. Full story at socialistworker.co.uk

FRACKING



Picture: Josh Brown

OVER 300 people from across Scotland and the north of England protested outside Ineos at Grangemouth oil refinery in Scotland against fracking. Their message was aimed at Westminster and Holyrood politicians and at anti-union billionaire Ineos boss Jim Ratcliffe.

DEFENCE WORKERS

New deal at DSG but strikes can win more

DEFENCE SUPPORT Group (DSG) bosses made workers a new offer on Monday of this week in the hope of ending a dispute that saw 16 days of strikes at the end of last year.

The Unite union members at the firm are now considering a £1,250 lump sum payment.

Bosses have given ten days for the union to respond then, they say, they will withdraw the deal.

"Getting an offer on the table worth over 5.5 percent for most DSG workers is testament to the massive economic impact our strikes have had," shop steward Ollie Jones told Socialist Worker.

"It shows what can be done when a fight is taken to the bosses and workers stay solid," he added.

But it is not the consolidated pay rise that workers have struck for.

Power

They have shown they have the power to take on the bosses and more strikes could win a pay rise.

"More could be achieved if we reject the offer and carry on the fight," said Ollie.

Unite has recruited massively because it has led a fightback—accepting this deal now will only lead to new

attacks in the future.

Ministry of Defence bosses are under pressure to settle the dispute ahead of DSG's planned sale to private company Babcock on 1 April.

They want a smooth transition to Babcock, who want workers who will accept low pay, to allow them to drive down costs and win contracts.

Workers should reject this offer and turn the heat up on the bosses with more strikes. They have the power to win.

Solidarity from the trade union movement is crucial. ●Send messages of support dsgstrike@yahoo.com

FOOD WORKERS

Workers resist the squeeze of juice giant

MORE THAN 400 workers at the Bridgwater based juice giant Refresco Gerber, in south west England, struck for 36 hours from Tuesday of this week.

The Unite union members have announced eleven 36-

hour strikes over ten weeks.

Bosses have introduced cuts to shift and sick pay, imposed new shift patterns as well as cuts to overtime and bank holiday pay, and holiday entitlements. The juice maker produces supermarket own

brand products for Waitrose, Asda and Tesco.

The production operators, engineers and warehouse workers plan a further ten 36-hour walkouts beginning on 2, 4, 12, 18 and 27 February, 2, 12, 18, 24 March and 1 April.

CIVIL SERVICE WORKERS

Defend our union from Tories' assault on democracy

THE PCS is being subjected to a vicious assault aimed at breaking our union.

The Tories are cutting our facility time to prevent us from supporting our members and cutting off PCS finances to threaten the viability of the union.

They have also encouraged and instructed senior civil servants to help set up and recognise scab unions.

There is a financial crisis in the PCS and we have

to deal with it. But the suspension of group and executive elections as part of emergency measures to deal with the financial crisis is neither justified or helpful.

Membership involvement must be at the heart of any defence of our union.

We were both signatories to a recent statement on the financial crisis and union democracy. In just a few weeks 13 branches and 90 activists signed the statement.

It asked the executive to reverse its decision on elections. However the executive decided to continue with the suspension of elections.

We will now be taking this up again at conference.

We also asked that the executive embark on a national consultation over the financial crisis. We urge our senior leadership to take that consultation process forward.

We also need to

MPs: No ban on fracking

CALLS FOR a moratorium on fracking were defeated in parliament this week by 308 votes to 52. Most Labour MPs abstained in the vote.

That was despite a warning from Westminster's environmental audit committee ahead of the debate on fracking in the Tories' Infrastructure Bill.

It said fracking should be put on hold because "it is incompatible with climate change targets and could pose significant localised environmental risks to public health".

Moves to devolve licensing

to Scotland were also blocked, puncturing one of David Cameron's devolution promises last week. But the Scottish government has powers to block fracking using the planning process.

Despite posturing last weekend, saying he would ban fracking in Scotland if he was elected first minister, Scottish Labour leader Jim Murphy didn't even turn up to vote.

That a Labour amendment for some tighter rules passed unopposed says all you need to know about those rules. It supported fracking.

EDUCATION



Picture: George Arthur

Barnsley College workers striking over pay in 2013

Barnsley pay fight resumes

WORKERS AT Barnsley College were set to begin a three-day strike on Thursday of this week.

The UCU union members are fighting a management restructure that imposes worse pay and conditions on workers.

Workers plan to march from the college to join striking health workers on the first day of the strike.

They were set to discuss a proposal to escalate their action to a four-day strike in February at a branch meeting on Wednesday of this week.

Sadie Robinson
●Rush messages of support to lee.short1975@gmail.com
Send solidarity donations and make cheques payable to Barnsley College UCU c/o 43 Granville Street, Barnsley S75 2TQ

EDUCATION ROUND-UP

HIGHER education lecturers have voted by 67 percent to accept an offer on their USS pension scheme.

The workers' UCU union devised the offer in response to an attack on the scheme by bosses. But the union's offer is only slightly better than the bosses'. It will see workers paying more into their pension but receiving less when they retire.

Meanwhile over 20 UCU branches have passed a motion calling for a special Higher Education Sector Conference to discuss the pensions dispute.

■KEVIN COURTNEY was re-elected as the National Union of Teachers deputy general secretary on Monday of this week winning 61 percent of the vote.

■SOME 2,000 court staff and prison service workers in Scotland, members of the PCS union, struck on Monday of this week in a dispute over pay.

They are demanding a 5 percent pay increase for public sector workers.

■PCS UNION members at the National Gallery have voted to strike by over 93 percent on turnout of almost 62 percent.

Five days of strikes are planned but have still to be announced.

●Details of how to support the workers at on.fb.me/1wzqQPw

CARE WORKERS

Tory attacks lead to pay walkouts

by RAYMIE KIERNAN

CARE WORKERS in north London struck for two days last week against an imposed 9.5 percent pay cut. It was their fifth strike day in as many months.

The Unison union members work for Your Choice Barnet (YCB), a Barnet Council-controlled, outsourced company. They care for adults with disabilities.

At the picket line at Flower Lane, day centre strikers were angry at the Tory-run council outsourcing services, slashing jobs and pay, and increasing the use of agency workers.

Unison rep Keith Goodes told Socialist Worker, "This strike is not just about pay but the future quality of the service."

Since setting up YCB as a local authority trading company in early 2012 staffing levels have been cut by 30 percent cut.

The Tories voted through more cuts of £90 million last month, including to social care services.

New "alternative delivery models" are being sought by the council, which prefers to commission rather than provide local services.

Unison has said that over 80 percent of services could



BARNET STRIKERS on the picket line

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

now be outsourced.

It has also questioned many details of the company's finances.

YCB took a £1 million loan from Barnet Homes, also controlled by the council, which created large financial difficulties and put pressure on jobs and pay to be cut.

It has also transpired that, unlike deals for private companies given council

contracts, Barnet Council is not covering historic pension contributions for YCB workers.

The union has rightly asked why private firms receive preferential treatment.

This has also added more strain to YCB's finances. But the workers are determined to fight.

●Send messages of support and requests for speakers to

contactus@barnetunison.org.uk. Send strike fund donations to Barnet Unison Industrial Action Fund, Building 4, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, London N11 1NP. Barnet Unison has organised a Social Care Workers Commission Wed 28 January, 6.30pm, Committee Room 10, House of Commons, London SW1A 2TT.

Go to barnetunison.me.uk

TRANSPORT WORKERS



Bus drivers on strike in London

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

Bus drivers up for a fight against transport bosses

THE UNITE union's campaign for equal pay for drivers across London's 18 bus companies is expected to take a step forward.

Socialist Worker understands that more action could be called this week.

The drivers' 24-hour strike just over two weeks ago showed the power they have to win this battle against transport bosses.

One Unite rep told Socialist Worker, "Our strike was brilliant and the turnout was better than many expected."

"This will get stronger if we quickly call sustained action."

"Drivers are up for this fight and now want to get more involved in the campaign."

At least three quarters of

the capital's buses weren't running, even according to the most hopeful statements from Transport for London (TfL) bosses.

They said a third of services ran—but their own figures contradicted this claim.

It's good that Unite has begun the fight for equal pay across London. The union should now involve as many of its members as possible to build stronger action.

And everyone should continue to build solidarity and help the drivers win their fight.

A victory for London bus drivers will build confidence among other workers and show how to fight Tory attacks on pay.

DOCKLANDS LIGHT RAILWAY

A 48-HOUR strike by RMT union members on London's Docklands Light Railway (DLR) this week was called off after talks, and the strike threat, resolved the dispute.

Workers being reassigned to different jobs without consent will now be brought back in-house. Inferior policies on maternity and

paternity leave will revert to existing agreements, with any future review done through consultation.

Nothing was said about a disputed longer waiting period for full sick pay entitlement.

Outstanding health and safety issues are to be worked out at meetings with RMT health and safety reps.

FIGHTING THE CUTS

Freedom Riders keep up the fight over travel fares

SOME 30 South Yorkshire Freedom Riders protested at the Barnsley offices of Stagecoach bus managers on Monday of this week.

They were demanding that bosses spend some of Stagecoach's £148 million profit from 2014 to introduce a £1 flat fare. This would be for older people on its buses before 9.30am and after 11pm.

One bus company in South Yorkshire, TM Travel, has already introduced this.

We lost the right to use our bus passes for free travel at this time last year.

After Monday's demonstration a delegation of protesters met with senior Stagecoach managers. Activist George

Arthur said, "There were no concessions today, but bosses were clearly affected by our protest."

"We will be back and we will be protesting at every other South Yorkshire bus company too."

Freedom Riders are also organising a coach from South Yorkshire to demonstrate outside Northern Rail headquarters in York on 2 March.

We will be there from 12 noon and we are calling on trade unionists, students and pensioner groups to join us.

Dave Gibson, Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) parliamentary candidate for Barnsley Central

CLEANERS



Cleaners on strike at Soas last year

PICTURE: TERRY McGRATH

Soas set for week of action

THE JUSTICE for Cleaners campaign at the School of Oriental and African Studies (Soas) in central London was to launch a week of action on Thursday of this week.

The long-running campaign to win equal terms and conditions by cleaners in the Unison union has broad support.

Cleaners struck last year and won improved holidays,

sick pay and pensions from their employer, outsourcing giant ISS.

Now they demand to be brought back in-house on the same terms as other workers at Soas and for an end to the two-tier workforce.

●Join the protest on Thursday 29 January, 1pm, Soas main building. For information on the campaign go to on.fb.me/1zODMoN

HOUSING

>> continued from page 20 made the payments.

This was the second time the bank has tried to evict him. He said the protest outside his home gave him "a new lease of life".

The March for Homes is demanding secure tenancies for all, rent controls and an end to the demolition of council housing.

Marchers also want new council homes built, lower rents and the scrapping of the bedroom tax and welfare caps.

Two feeder marches, one from Shoreditch in east London and one from Elephant and Castle in south London, will converge at Tower Bridge.

Protesters plan to target Tory London mayor Boris Johnson by surrounding City Hall.

Campaigners hope the march can kick-start more action to fight for decent housing and to stop evictions.

Eileen Short is chair of Defend Council Housing, a co-organiser of the March for Homes. She told Socialist

Worker, "We are planning a 'Love Council Housing' day on Saturday 14 February."

"And there will be more protests in the week leading up to 23 February, when the mayor's budget will be set."

Saturday's march has support from MPs, tenants' groups, anti-cuts organisations, trades councils and unions. Marchers plan to organise several blocs to represent different groups of workers.

"This is a trade union issue," said Eileen. "Workers need affordable, good quality housing. The Bectu union is nationally supporting the march. People should raise these issues at work and get their union branches to support protests over housing."

●March For Homes—assemble 12 noon, Saturday 31 January at Shoreditch Church, Shoreditch High St, E1 6JN or at St Mary's Churchyard, Elephant & Castle, SE1 6SQ. Assemble for an accessible short march at 1.30pm, Potters Field St, SE1 2AA. Go to marchforhomes.org

KEEP UP FIGHT TO SAVE NHS

Half a million health workers were set to strike this Thursday, 29 January, but some union leaders were set to call it off writes **Tomáš Tengely-Evans**

UP TO 500,000 health workers were set to walk out for 12 hours on Thursday of this week. But as *Socialist Worker* went to press there were fears that leaders of the Unison union were looking to suspend the action.

It was suggested that the Tories and union leaders had cobbled together a similar deal as in last year's local government pay dispute.

Any such deal would be a serious mistake. It would leave health workers underpaid, overworked and stressed. It would throw away a chance to mobilise a huge campaign in defence of the NHS.

It was not clear what other unions would do. They should strike regardless of what Unison leaders decide.

Healthworkers must reject any such deal, and everyone who hates the Tories must keep fighting to stop the destruction of the health service.

It is not enough to hope that Labour will save it.

Crisis

The crisis in the NHS is partly caused by health cuts, closures and privatisation. But it is also because the NHS is the place where all the other Tory cuts are focused.

Slashing local government means that people who could leave hospital are denied the care that would let them return to their homes.

When a million people use food banks don't be surprised that illness soars.

Homeless people and those in overcrowded housing are more likely to need the NHS.

The strike set for this week was about pay. Health workers are furious that health secretary Jeremy Hunt has refused to give most even a 1 percent pay rise.

The Tories then upped the stakes by launching a fresh attack on unsocial hours pay. Disgustingly Hunt said



STRIKERS AT St George's Hospital in Tooting last November

PICTURE: BEN WINDSOR

the strike had "the potential to affect patient safety to an unacceptable level" and put lives at risk.

This was utter hypocrisy. It is Tory policies that are costing lives and threatening patients. By defending the NHS, strikers are protecting us all.

Documents shown to *Socialist Worker* reveal bosses' desperate attempts to get nurses and doctors to

scab on the strike (see picture below). Ron Singer from the doctors' section of Unite condemned the move. He said, "The government always says that health workers going on strike will cause patient fatalities."

"But it is dangerous to get people to do jobs they aren't trained to do. We should reject management's requests and join any picket lines."

Trade unionists and

campaigners were collecting money to show their support for the strike, and planned to join health workers' picket lines in solidarity.

Students were also backing the action. "I'll definitely support health workers if they strike," Imperial College medical student Alex told *Socialist Worker*.

"I've got six years left on my course—but I'm worried that the NHS won't be there when I graduate."

Desperate

Ed Miliband said last week that "The future of the NHS is at stake in this general election".

On Tuesday he pledged to repeal the hated Health and Social Care Act and recruit more staff.

But Labour remains committed to the Tories' spending cuts. And the 36,000 more health workers Labour

promises are at least 24,000 fewer than the Tories have cut.

If Labour supports the NHS, it should promise far more—including the reversal of all the Tory cuts, decent pay for healthworkers, an end to privatisation and the abolition of the Private Finance Initiative schemes that are so destructive of the health service.

The Tories reopened NHS pay talks this week because they know that most of the public back NHS workers and blame the Tories for the crisis.

They feared that the strikes would deepen the political crisis they face.

Some union leaders clearly believe that the strike may embarrass Labour and that therefore the battle should be called off.

Such a surrender emphasises the need to fight for a different leadership in Unison.

Our health service matters too much to be thrown away.

HOMES

March for security in our housing

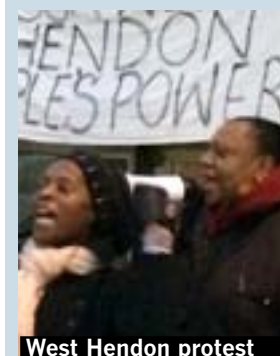
by **SADIE ROBINSON**

ACTIVISTS from the West Hendon estate plan to join thousands of other campaigners surrounding London's City Hall in protest at the capital's housing crisis this Saturday.

The March for Homes will bring together housing battles that are taking place across the city.

People on the West Hendon Estate in Barnet face eviction so that 2,000 new flats can be built.

Campaigners from across London joined a march to Hendon Town Hall in protest at



West Hendon protest

the plans on Thursday of last week.

Thomasina Mitchell, aged 73, has lived there for 42 years. "I don't want to have to move out at my age," she said. "I brought my family up there."

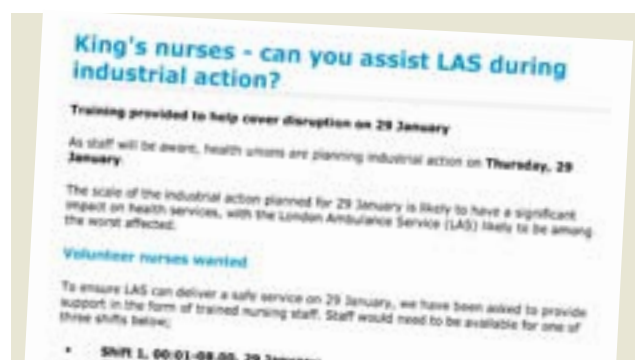
"They are playing roulette with the tenants on the estate. It's about time they put people before profits."

And battles over housing aren't limited to London. Hundreds of people gathered outside the home of Tom Crawford in Nottingham last week and stopped bailiffs evicting him.

Tom, who is 63 and has been treated for cancer, has been in dispute for five years over mortgage payments.

Bradford & Bingley bank claims he owes it over £40,000 but Tom says he has

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The letter calling on workers to scab on the strike